eISSN 2587-9731

Современные проблемы музыкознания



Contemporary Musicology

Том Vol. 10 № 1

2026

eISSN 2587-9731

Ministry of Culture
of the Russian Federation

Gnesin Russian Academy of Music

Contemporary Musicology

Peer-reviewed open-access scholarly online journal

2026/10(1)

DOI: https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1

eISSN 2587-9731

Министерство культуры
Российской Федерации

Российская академия музыки
имени Гнесиных

Современные проблемы музыкознания

Рецензируемое периодическое научное издание

2026/10(1)

16+

DOI: https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1

eISSN 2587-9731
Contemporary Musicology
16+

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Founded: 2017.

The Journal publishes research studies in the field of music history and theory, music performance, as well as the methodology of music studies in interdisciplinary contexts. The Journal's scope corresponds to the subject categorie of 5.10.3. *Types of Art (Musical Art) (Art History)*.

Languages of publication: Russian and English.

The Editorial Team is guided by the Core Practices developed by the *Committee on Publication Ethics* (*COPE*).

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The Journal is registered in the *Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology, and Mass Communications*.

Certificate of Registration: **ЭЛ № ФС 77 - 86261 27.10.2023.**

eISSN 2587-9731

FOUNDER AND PUBLISHER: **Gnesin Russian Academy of Music.**

The journal is published by the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music — the member of the *Association of Science Editors and Publishers* (*ASEP*) and the *Publishers' International Linking Association* (*PILA*).

Periodicity: Quarterly.

No fee is charged from the authors for the submission, peer review, and publication process.

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eISSN 2587-9731

Современные проблемы музыкознания

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Журнал включен в индекс научных изданий открытого доступа *Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)*.

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Свидетельство о регистрации: **ЭЛ № ФС 77 - 86261 27.10.2023.**

eISSN 2587-9731

УЧРЕДИТЕЛЬ И ИЗДАТЕЛЬ: Федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение высшего образования **«Российская академия музыки имени Гнесиных».**

Издатель — Российская академия музыки имени Гнесиных — является членом Ассоциации научных редакторов и издателей (АНРИ), Международной ассоциации по связям издателей — *Publishers International Linking Association* (*PILA*).

Журнал выходит с периодичностью 4 раза в год.

Плата за подачу, рецензирование и публикацию статей не взимается.

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eISSN 2587-9731
Contemporary Musicology

eISSN 2587-9731
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Official website | Официальный веб-сайт журнала:
https://gnesinsjournal.ru

eISSN 2587-9731
Contemporary Musicology
eISSN 2587-9731
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16+

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF | ОТ ГЛАВНОГО РЕДАКТОРА

Dear friends!

The journal Contemporary Musicology has been published for eight years. In 2022, it was included in the list of publications recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission for the publication of materials for future doctoral and candidate dissertations, and in 2024, in Scopus, an authoritative bibliographic and abstract database of peer-reviewed scientific literature. Since 2023, the journal has been published in two languages with parallel publication of each article in Russian and English. These achievements make us happy. However, for the editorial board and the editorial team, the most important thing remains cooperation with dozens of leading musicologists from Russia and abroad and talented young researchers. And, of course, the attention and interest of our readers, whose circle is growing year by year. In 2025, the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music celebrates the 130th anniversary of the Gnesin educational institutions. The study and publication of previously unknown documents and theoretical sources that allow us to take a fresh look at understanding the historical and musical process are all cross-cutting topics this year, which will be initiated by a series of articles in the first issue of the journal. Our publication continues to participate in organizing major international conferences at the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music together with leading universities and research institutes of our country. In 2025, one of the central events of the scientific year will be the conference Technique of Musical Composition. Shostakovich in Memoriam (on the 50th Anniversary of His Death), which will bring together more than 100 speakers from different countries and many cities of Russia. The life and work of the great composer is another key topic of 2025.

We wish you an interesting and informative reading!

Irina Susidko

Дорогие друзья!

Журнал «Современные проблемы музыкознания» издается уже девять лет. В 2024 году он вошел в Scopus, авторитетную библиографическую и реферативную базу данных рецензируемой научной литературы. С этого же года он начал выходить на двух языках с параллельными публикациями статей на русском и английском, что расширило круг наших авторов. Для редколлегии и редакционной команды по-прежнему самым важным остается сотрудничество с десятками ведущих музыковедов России и зарубежья и талантливыми молодыми исследователями. Изучение межнациональных пересечений и взаимодействий, проблем музыкальной педагогики, исполнительства и психологии — сквозные темы этого года, начало им положено статьями первого номера журнала. Наше издание продолжает участвовать в организации крупных международных конференций в Российской академии музыки имени Гнесины в консорциуме с ведущими вузами и научными институтами страны. В 2025-м одним из центральных событий научного года была конференция «Техника музыкальной композиции. Шостакович in memoriam (к 50-летию со дня смерти)». Публикация статей, посвященных биографии и творчеству композитора, будет продолжена и в 2026 году, когда исполняется 120 лет со дня его рождения.

Желаем вам интересного и познавательного чтения!

Ирина Петровна Сусидко

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Nucio J. Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus.
Neisse: Crispini Scharffenbergi, 1613

Современные проблемы музыкознания /
Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Technique of Musical Composition

Original article
UDC 781.6
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-011-032
EDN JDHCCT

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"Non-rhetorical" musical-rhetorical figures in the treatises of the Baroque era*

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Abstract. The article explores a seemingly non-obvious yet significant component of musical-rhetorical figures, a phenomenon widely discussed in musicology. This component is defined by the compositional and technical aspects of the figures rather than their intonational-semantic or musical-symbolic qualities. The study focuses on the so-called *principal figures* (*figuræ principales* / *figuræ fundamentales*) found in treatises of the 17th and the first half of the 18th century, specifically in the classifications of Johannes Nucius, Joachim Thuringus, Athanasius Kircher, Tomáš Baltazar Janovka (Janowka), Christoph Bernhard, Johann Gottfried Walther, and their successor Johann Adolf Scheibe.

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Translated by Irina G. Latysheva

By examining two chronologically disparate lists — the earliest and latest, found in the works of Nucius (*Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*, Neisse, 1613) and Scheibe (*Critischer Musicus*, Leipzig, 1745) — the author analyzes figures that define the rules for using dissonances on weak and strong beats. In these theoretical descriptions, the figures do not align with the criteria typically used in modern musicology to characterize musical-rhetorical figures (such as deviations from the *stile antico* norms, enhancement of expressive delivery, or the representation of affects and ideas). Instead, the figures *commissura directa* and *commissura cadens* in Nucius's explanation, as well as *transitus*, *ligatura*, and *syncopatio* in Scheibe's description, represent the codification of normative, conventional techniques well-known to musicians. Johann Adolf Scheibe labels these techniques as "figures," he subsequently employs the term "rule" (*Compositionsregeln*, *harmonische Regeln*) when detailing their characteristics. The coexistence of components oriented toward both old and new norms demonstrates the heterogeneous nature of these lists. This circumstance highlights significant contradictions between authentic historical knowledge and the prevalent interpretation of figures in modern musical analysis, while also suggesting new directions for researching the genesis of musical figures — analogous to rhetorical ones — within Baroque treatises.

Keywords: musical-rhetorical figures, musical rhetoric, German music theory, history of music theory, doctrine of composition, music treatises, German Baroque music, rules of counterpoint, Johannes Nucius, *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*, Johann Adolf Scheibe, *Critischer Musicus*

For citation: Maltseva, A. A. (2026). "Non-rhetorical" musical-rhetorical figures in the treatises of the Baroque era. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 11–32. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-011-032

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* The article is based on the paper *Musical-rhetorical figures of the Baroque: authentic knowledge vs. analytical model* presented at the 6th International Scientific Conference "Technique of musical composition: theory and practice" Shostakovich in memoriam (Gnesin Russian Academy of Music, April 14–18, 2025).

Техника музыкальной композиции

Научная статья

«Нериторические» музыкально-риторические фигуры в трудах эпохи барокко*

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Аннотация. В статье исследуется на первый взгляд неочевидная, но значимая составляющая широко распространенных в музыкознании музыкально-риторических фигур, которая определяется композиционно-техническим, а не интонационно-семантическим и музыкально-символическим качеством этого феномена. Поводом для исследования этого аспекта в статье становятся так называемые *основные фигуры* (*figuræ principales* / *figuræ fundamentales*) в трудах XVII — первой половины XVIII века, отраженные в классификациях Иоганна Нуция, Иоахима Турингуса, Афанасия Кирхера, Томаша Бальтазара Яновки, Кристофа Бернхарда и Иоганна Вальтера, а также их последователя Иоганна Адольфа Шайбе. На примере двух хронологически самого раннего и самого позднего списков, приведенных в трудах Нуция (*Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*,

Нейссе, 1613) и Шайбе (*Critischer Musicus*, Лейпциг, 1745), рассматриваются фигуры, определяющие правила применения диссонансов на слабом и сильном времени. В описаниях теоретиков они не ориентированы на те критерии, которые в музыковедческих исследованиях обычно служат для характеристики музыкально-риторических фигур (отступление от норм строгого стиля, усиление выразительности высказывания, выражение аффектов и идей): фигуры *commissura directa* и *commissura cadens* в разъяснении Нуция, а также фигуры *transitus*, *ligatura* и *syncopatio* в описании Шайбе представляют собой фиксацию нормативных, общепринятых и хорошо знакомых музыкантам приемов. Шайбе, хотя и называет эти приемы фигурами, при изложении их особенностей в дальнейшем использует понятие *правило*: *Compositionsregeln*, *harmonische Regeln* (*композиционные правила*, *гармонические правила*). Сосуществование компонентов, ориентированных на старые и новые нормы, демонстрирует гетерогенную природу перечней фигур. Это обстоятельство подчеркивает значительные противоречия, которые возникают при изучении источников и современной музыковедческой литературы, между аутентичным знанием и распространенной трактовкой фигур в музыкальной аналитике, а также определяет перспективность дальнейшего исследования генезиса музыкальных фигур, аналогичных риторическим, в трактатах эпохи барокко.

Ключевые слова: музыкально-риторические фигуры, музыкальная риторика, немецкая теория музыки, история теории музыки, учение о композиции, трактаты о музыке, немецкое музыкальное барокко, правила контрапункта, Иоганн Нуций, *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*, Иоганн Адольф Шайбе, *Critischer Musicus*

Для цитирования: *Мальцева А. А.* «Нериторические» музыкально-риторические фигуры в трудах эпохи барокко // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 11–32.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-011-032

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*Статья написана по материалам доклада «Музыкально-риторические фигуры барокко: аутентичное знание vs аналитическая модель» на Шестой международной научной конференции «Техника музыкальной композиции: теория и практика» Памяти Д. Д. Шостаковича (Российская академия музыки имени Гнесиных, 14–18 апреля 2025 г.).

Introduction

A comparison between the lists of musical figures recorded in 17th and early 18th-century sources[1] and the widespread analytical model based on their reduced inventory reveals several contradictions between authentic theoretical knowledge and the hermeneutic approach that originated in German musicology in the first half of the 20th century. During this period, the concept of a unified system of figures emerged, later known as *Figurenlehre* (for further details, see [1; 2]). Dietrich Bartel operated within the framework of this *Figurenlehre* concept, synthesizing ideas about figures in his renowned compendium (1985) [3], an expanded version of which was also published in English (1997) [4]. Among the numerous international articles and dissertations from the last quarter of the 20th and early 21st centuries aimed at criticizing and debunking the "myth of *Figurenlehre*," one should note the article by Janina Klassen (2001) [5], which presents a series of contradictions in a discursive manner, signaling the need for a re-evaluation of this phenomenon. The situation in Russian musicology appears rather complex: the differences in interpretative approaches by Albert Schweitzer [6] — whose work was translated into Russian in 1964 and significantly influenced Soviet music science[2] — Boleslav Yavorsky [7], and Roman E. Berchenko [8] have led to a blending and substitution of the terms "figures" and "Bachian motive-symbols" [9]. Nevertheless, this has produced an effective and widely utilized hermeneutic approach within the realm of musical-semantic analysis.

[1] These include the works of Joachim Burmeister (*Hypomnematum Musicæ Poeticæ*, 1599; *Musica αυτοσχεδιαστική*, 1601; *Musica poetica*, 1606), Johannes Nucio (*Musices poeticæ*, 1613), Joachim Thuringus (*Opusculum bipartitum*, 1624), Athanasius Kircher (*Musurgia universalis*, 1650), Tomáš Baltazar Janovka (*Clavis ad thesaurum magnæ artis musicæ*, 1701), Johann Adolf Scheibe (*Critischer Musicus*, 1745), and others.

[2] Schweitzer, A. (1964). *Iogann Sebast'yan Bakh* [Johann Sebastian Bach]. Muzyka. For English translation see Schweitzer, A. (1980). *J. S. Bach* (E. Newman, Trans., 2 Vols.). Paganiniana Publications.

The Figurenlehre functions in contemporary musicology as a form of mythologized knowledge, only partially connected to its historical roots. The doctrine relies on a number of assertions, including, for example, the following:

- there is a system of Baroque musical-rhetorical figures;
- figures are described 'in treatises on musical rhetoric' and 'clearly codified'; figures listed in treatises form a universal vocabulary of intonation-symbols ("musical lexicon of the Baroque era");
- figures are exclusively deviations from the norms of strict counterpoint used to enhance the expressiveness of an utterance;
- stable meanings of musical-rhetorical figures are given in Baroque treatises;
- there are many figures recorded, but composers use only "the most common" (from ten to twenty figures);
- the doctrine of musical and rhetorical figures belongs to Protestant musical theory [10, p. 101]

When discussing musical-rhetorical figures, researchers emphasize their pronounced affective and expressive nature. In recent studies, we find the following:

> Musical-rhetorical figures are specific turns of phrase or sound formulas that have acquired stable meanings for expressing *an emotional movement* (*affect*) *or a concept* [emphasis mine. — *A. M.*]. They constitute the musical "lexicon" of the era [11, p. 125].

> Musical-rhetorical figures are stable intonational formulas used by composers (analogous to the figures of oratorical speech) *as emblems of musical symbolism to express a specific affect, concept, or idea in sound* [emphasis mine. — *A. M.*] [12, p. 102].

The purpose of the article is to examine, through the example of several musical figures included in Baroque treatises, the extent to which the concepts of rhetoricality and expressiveness were attributed to them in theoretical texts. Furthermore, it is essential to consider that "musical-rhetorical figures differed from other linguistic and stylistic elements by their *conscious deviation from the norm* [emphasis mine. — *A. M.*]" [13, p. 196]. The concept of the linguistic norm, so vital in the art of *eloquentia* (eloquence), will also be a focal point of our study as we examine these lists of figures from the chosen perspective.

Figuræ principales and minus principales

Some theorists divide figures into *principales* and *minus principales*. The *principales* figures refer not to musical "liberties" or "excesses," but to techniques well-known to musicians and conventional for the stile antico (strict counterpoint). In the sources, *principales* figures are designated as follows:

- *figuræ principales* according to Johannes Nucius,[3] Joachim Thuringus,[4] Athanasius Kircher,[5] and Tomáš Baltazar Janovka[6];
- *figuræ fundamentales* according to Christoph Bernhard[7] and Johann Gottfried Walther.[8]

The line of principales figures is continued in the catalogue of Johann Adolf Scheibe,[9] although he does not employ the aforementioned group designations[10] (see *Tables 1* and *2*):

[3] Nucio, J. (1613). *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*. Crispini Scharffenbergi, Fol. F4^{v}–G2^{r}.

[4] Thuringus, J. (1624). *Opusculum bipartitum, De primordiis musicis*. II. Georgij Rungij, pp. 97–124.

[5] Kircher, A. (1650). *Musurgia universalis sive Ars magna consoni et dissoni* (Vol. 1). Hæredum Francisci Corbelletti, p. 366. See also Nasonov, R. A. (2009). Muzykal'naya ritorika Afanasiya Kirkhera: k istorii "gotovykh slov" [Athanasius Kircher's *Musical Rhetoric: On the History of "Ready-Made Words"*]. In L. V. Savvina & V. O. Petrov (Eds.), *Muzykal'noe iskusstvo i nauka v XXI veke: istoriya, teoriya, ispolnitel'stvo, pedagogika* [Musical art and science in the 21st century: history, theory, performance, pedagogy]: *Proceedings of the International Conference to the 40th Anniversary of the Astrakhan State Conservatoire*. Astrakhanskii institut povysheniya kvalifikatsii i perepodgotovki, pp. 115–121, p. 119.

[6] Janowka, T. B. (1701). *Clavis ad thesaurum magnæ artis musicæ*. Georgij Labaun, pp. 47–51.

[7] Bernhard, Chr. (n.d.) *Ausführlicher Bericht vom Gebrauchen Con- und Dissonantien* [ms.]. [s.l.]: [s.n.], [s.a.]. Bl. 12r–15r; Bernhard, Chr. (1926). Ausführlicher Bericht vom Gebrauchen Con- und Dissonantien. In J. M. Müller-Blattau (Ed.), *Die Kompositionslehre Heinrich Schützens in der Fassung seines Schülers Christoph Bernhard*. Breitkopf & Härtel, pp. 144–147. See also Katunyan, M. I. (1985). Uchenie o kompozitsii Genrikha Shyuttsa [Heinrich Schütz's theory of composition]. In T. N. Dubravskaya (Ed.), *Genrikh Shyutts* [*Heinrich Schütz*]: *Collected Articles* (pp. 76–118). Muzyka.

[8] Walther, J. G. (1708). *Præcepta der Musicalischen Composition* (Vol. 2) [Manuscript]. [Weimar], pp. 234–265; Walther, J. G. (1955). Præcepta der Musicalischen Composition (P. Benary, Ed.). Breitkopf & Härtel, pp. 140–152.

[9] Scheibe, J. A. (1740). *Der critische Musicus* (Vol. 2). Beneke, pp. 383–398. The list of figures is also presented in the edition summarizing both volumes of Scheibe's articles: Scheibe, J. A. (1745). *Critischer Musicus*. Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf, pp. 698–699.

[10] For more details on the succession of musical figure lists, see [14].

Table 1. Figuræ principales in the treatises of Johannes Nucius, Joachim Thuringus, Athanasius Kircher, and Tomáš Baltazar Janovka

1613, Nucius *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*, Cap. VII	**1624, Thuringus** *Opusculum bipartitum, De primordiis musicis*, Part. II, Cap. XV–XVIII	**1650, Kircher** *Musurgia universalis sive Ars magna consoni et dissoni*, T. 1, Lib. V, Cap. 19	**1701, Janowka** *Clavis ad thesaurum magnæ artis musicæ*, Figuræ Musicæ
Figuræ principales			
commissura	*commissura*	*commissura*	*commissura*
fuga	*fuga*	*syncopatio*	*syncopatio*
repetitio	*syncopatio*	*fuga*	*fuga*

Table 2. Figuræ fundamentales in the treatises of Christoph Bernhard, Johann Gottfried Walther, and Johann Adolf Scheibe

[s.a.], Bernhard *Ausführlicher Bericht vom Gebrauchen Con- und Dissonantien* [ms.], Cap. X–XXII	**1708, Walther** *Præcepta der Musicalischen Composition* [ms.], T. 2, Pars 2, Cap. 1, 4	**1740, Scheibe** *Der critische Musicus*, Bd. 2, S. 391 Sechs und siebenzigstes Stück
Figuræ fundamentales		—
ligatura / syncopatio	*syncopatio / ligatura*	*transitus*
transitus	*transitus / commissura*	*ligatura* and *syncopatio / syncope*
—	*fuga*	—

To illustrate the evolution of the principal figures group, let us examine the rules of dissonance in the works of the chronologically earliest and latest theorists — Nucius and Scheibe. (We deliberately exclude the question of the fugue as a musical figure from this article, despite its frequent mentions in Baroque treatises. This subject is too extensive and warrants separate research.[11])

The Typology of Figures in Nucius's Treatise

The music theorist and Cistercian monk Johannes Nucius (1556–1620), in his treatise *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus* (Neisse, 1613[12]), proposes dividing figures into *figurae principales* and *figurae minus principales*.[13] His binary typology, likely reflecting the spirit of the late Renaissance and early Baroque,[14] proved to be in demand in later treatises (see *Table 1* and *Illustration 1*). Nucius explains:

> Et si ad Rhetorum imitationem non difficile erat ingentem figurarum Cathalogum coacervare, nos tamen brevitatis studio de septem sequentibus tantum agemus, ex quarum collatione, de alijs Harmoniæ ornamentis facile judicabunt discentes. Porro barum figurarum aliæ Principales sunt, ut Commissura, Fuga, Repetitio: Aliæ minus principales, ut Climax Complexio, Homioteleuton, Syncopatio.[15]

> Although, in imitation of rhetoricians, it would not be difficult to compile an extensive catalogue of figures, we nonetheless wish, for the sake of brevity, to discuss only the following seven, from the comparison of which students will easily be able to judge the other ornaments of harmony. For figures are either *principales*, such as *Commissura*, *Fuga*, and *Repetitio*, or *minus principales*, such as *Climax*, *Complexio*, *Hemioteleuton*, and *Syncopatio*.

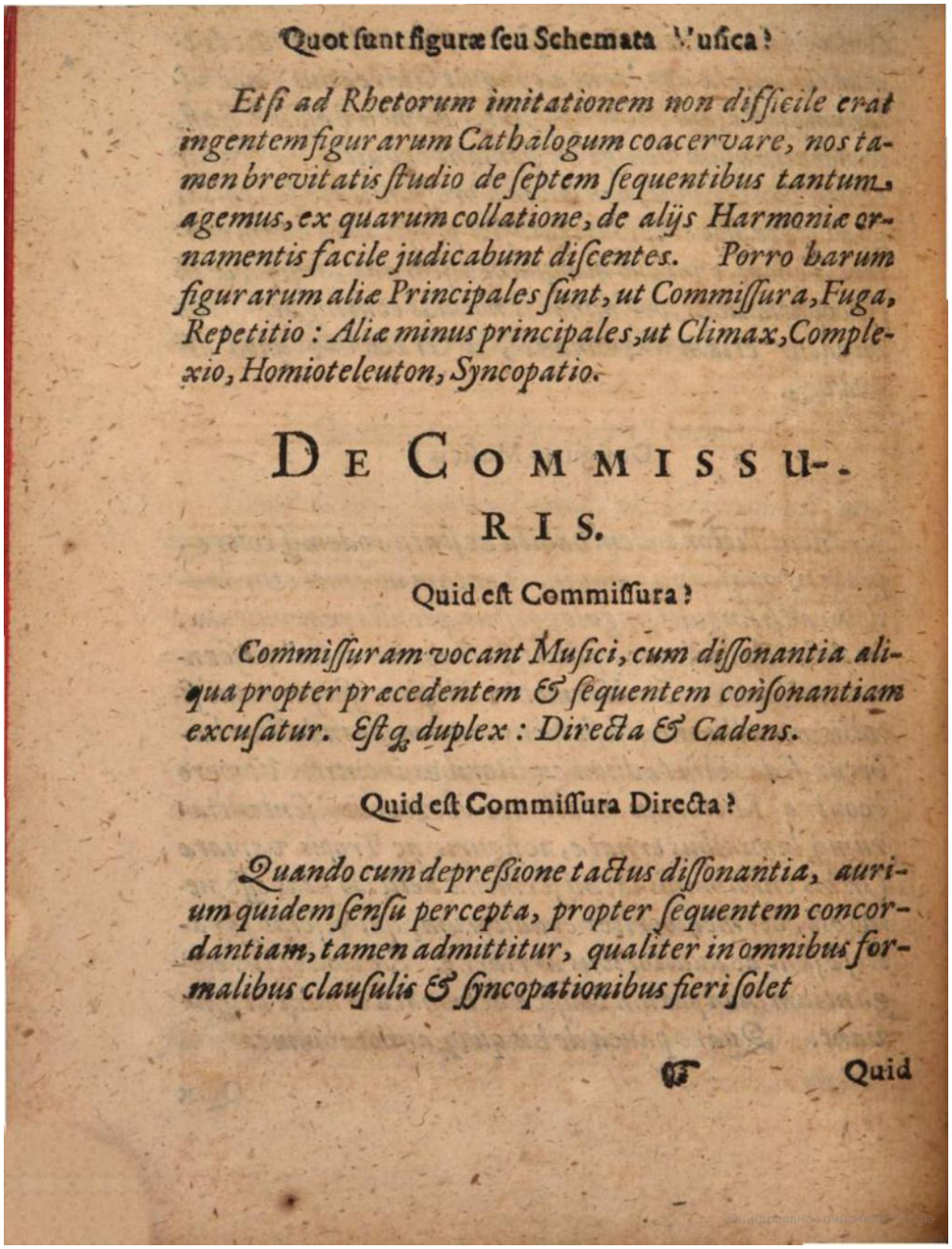
[11] The connection between fugue and rhetoric is discussed, for instance, by Gregory Butler (see Butler, G. G. (1977). Fugue and rhetoric. *Journal of Music Theory*, *21*(1), 49–109), Paul Walker (see Walker, P. M. (1987). *Fugue in German theory from Dressler to Mattheson* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. State University of New York at Buffalo), Daniel Harrison (see Harrison, D. (1990). Rhetoric and fugue: an analytical application. *Music Theory Spectrum*, *12*(1), 1–42. https://doi.org/10.2307/746145), and others. I would like to express gratitude to Larisa L. Gerver, Dr. Sci (Arts) and Professor at the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music, for the idea of conducting a specialized study of this issue from the perspective of the doctrine of figures.

[12] Nucio, J. (1613). *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus*. Crispini Scharffenbergi.

[13] For a more detailed discussion of Nucio's list of figures, see [15].

[14] One might consider, for instance, the self-explanatory title of Vincenzo Galilei's *Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna* (Florence, 1581), as well as the concepts of the *prima* and *seconda pratica*.

[15] Nucio, J., 1613, Fol. F4^{v}.



Quot ſunt figuræ ſeu Schemata Muſica?

Etſi ad Rhetorum imitationem non difficile erat ingentem figurarum Cathalogum coacervare, nos tamen brevitatis ſtudio de ſeptem ſequentibus tantum agemus, ex quarum collatione, de alijs Harmoniæ ornamentis facile judicabunt diſcentes. Porro harum figurarum aliæ Principales ſunt, ut Commiſſura, Fuga, Repetitio: Aliæ minus principales, ut Climax, Complexio, Homioteleuton, Syncopatio.

DE COMMISSURIS.

Quid eſt Commiſſura?

Commiſſuram vocant Muſici, cum diſſonantia aliqua propter præcedentem & ſequentem conſonantiam excuſatur. Eſtq; duplex: Directa & Cadens.

Quid eſt Commiſſura Directa?

Quando cum depreſſione tactus diſſonantia, auriumquidem ſenſu percepta, propter ſequentem concordantiam, tamen admittitur, qualiter in omnibus formalibus clauſulis & ſyncopationibus fieri ſolet

Quid

Illustration 1. Description of the *commissura* figure in Johannes Nucius's *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus* (Nucio, 1613, Fol. F4[r])

When examining the *principales* figures, Nucius does not dwell on the criteria for differentiating them from the *figurae minus principales* but proceeds directly to a description of their properties. The first of the *principales* figures, *commissura*, is presented in his treatise in two varieties: *directa* and *cadens* (see *Illustrations 1* and *2*):

Quid est Commissura?

Commissuram vocant Musici, cum dissonantia aliqua propter praecedentem & sequentem consonantiam excusatur. Est que duplex: Directa & Cadens.

Quid est Commissura Directa?

Quando cum depressione tactus dissonantia, aurium quidem sensu percepta. propter sequentem concordantiam, tamen admittatur, qualiter in omnibus formalibus clausulis & syncopationibus fieri solet.[16]

What is a *commissura*?

Musicians define commissura as a certain dissonance which is excused because of a preceding and following consonance. It is of two kinds: directa and cadens.

What is a *commissura directa*?

When the ear perceives a dissonance on the downbeat that is nonetheless admitted on account of the following consonance, which usually occurs in all formal cadences and in syncopationes [4, p. 419].

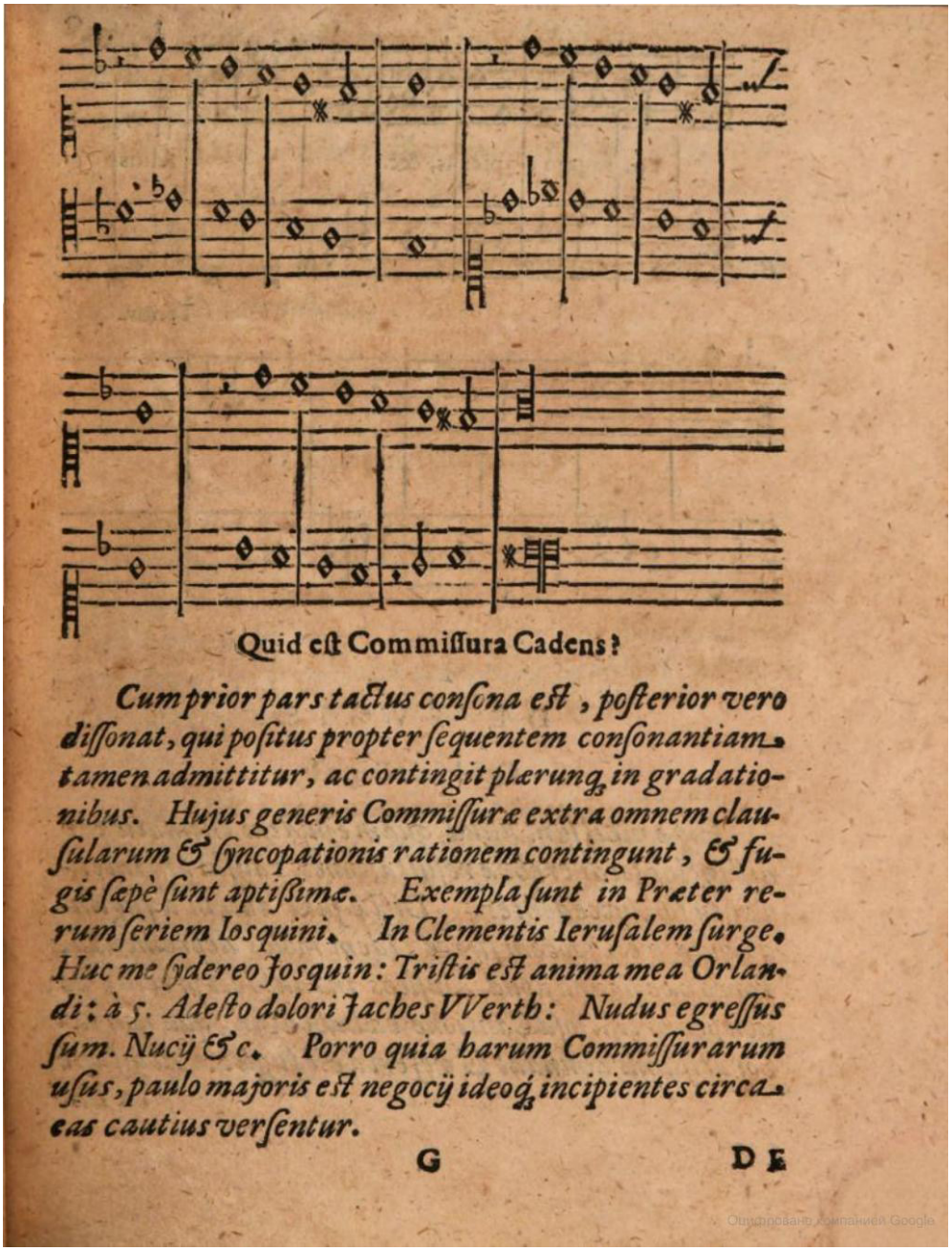
Quid est Commissura Cadens?

Cum prior pars tactus consona est, posterior vero dissonat, qui positus propter sequentem consonantiam tamen admittatur, ac contingit plærunque in gradationibus. Hujus generis Commissurae extra omnem clausularum & syncopationis rationem contingent, & fugis saepe sunt aptissimae. Exempla sunt in Præter rerum seriem Iosquini. In Clementis Ierusalem surge. Huc me sydereo Josquin: Tristis est anima mea Orlandi: à 5. Adesto dolori Jacbes VVertb: Nudus egressus sum. Nucÿ etc. Porro quiabarum Commissurarum usus, paulo majoris est negocÿ ideog incipientes circa eas cautious versentur.[17]

What is a *commissura cadens*?

When the first part of the tactus is consonant and the last part is dissonant, which is nonetheless admitted on account of the following consonance. It is often used in a *gradatio*. These kinds of *commissura* occur particularly in all cadences and *syncopationes*, and are especially appropriate in *fugae* [4, p. 419]. Examples include: Josquin's *Præter rerum seriem*, Clemens's Jerusalem surge, Josquin's *Huc me sydereo*, Lassus's *Tristis est anima mea* for five voices, Giaches de Wert's *Adesto dolori*, Nucius's *Nudus egressus sum*, etc. Since the use of these commissurae entails somewhat greater complexity, beginners should treat them with particular caution.

[16] Nucio, J., 1613, Fol. F4^{r}.
[17] Nucio, J., 1613, Fol. G1^{v}.



Quid eſt Commiſſura Cadens?

Cum prior pars tactus conſona eſt, poſterior vero diſſonat, qui poſitus propter ſequentem conſonantiam tamen admittitur, ac contingit plærunq; in gradationibus. Hujus generis Commiſſuræ extra omnem clauſularum & ſyncopationis rationem contingunt, & fugis ſæpè ſunt aptiſſimæ. Exempla ſunt in Præter rerum ſeriem Iosquini. In Clementis Ieruſalem ſurge. Huc me ſydereo Josquin: Triſtis eſt anima mea Orlandi: à 5. Adeſto dolori Jaches VVerth: Nudus egreſſus ſum. Nucij &c. Porro quia harum Commiſſurarum uſus, paulo majoris eſt negocij ideoq; incipientes circa eas cautius verſentur.

G D E

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Illustration 2. Description of the commissura figure in Johannes Nucius's treatise *Musices poeticæ sive de compositione cantus* (Nucio, 1613, Fol. G1^{v})

Thus, the musical figure included by Nucius in his list — compiled, as previously mentioned, "ad Rhetorum imitationem" — represents two fundamental rules of strict counterpoint: the use of dissonance on the strong beat (Commissura Directa) and on the weak beat (*Commissura Cadens*). The term *commissura* (Lat.—connection, joint), although originating in classical rhetoric, was not used to designate a figure, as far as I know. As Dietrich Bartel points out, referring to the ninth book of the *Institutio Oratoria*, "the term *commissura* appears in classical sources, where it is used not as a figure but rather simply to describe the unpleasant collision of ending and beginning consonants of subsequent words" [4, p. 415].[18]

It is plausible that the idea of designating a dissonance on a strong beat as a "direct connection of sonorities" (*commissura directa*) and a dissonance on a weak beat as a "mediated (indirect) connection of sonorities" (*commissura cadens*) belongs to Nucius himself. However, it should be noted that Burmeister had already recognized the possibility of describing the link between dissonances and consonances in general through the term commissura, ultimately preferring its Greek equivalent.

[18] As Marcus Fabius Quintilianus writes in the *Institutio Oratoria*: "Qua de re utar Ciceronis potissimum verbis. *Habet* inquit *ille tamquam hiatus et concursus vocalium molle quiddam et quod indicet non ingratam neglegentiam de re hominis magis quam de verbis laborantis*. Ceterum consonantes quoque, earumque praecipue quae sunt asperiores, in commissura verborum rixantur, ut s ultima cum x proxima, quarum tristior etiam si binae collidantur stridor est, ut *ars studiorum*." ("I cannot do better than quote the words of Cicero on this subject. *Hiatus*, he says, *and the meeting of vowels produce a certain softness of effect, such as to suggest a not unpleasing carelessness on the part of the orator, as though he were more anxious about his matter than his words*. But consonants also are liable to conflict at the juncture of words, more especially those letters which are comparatively harsh in sound; as for instance when the final *s* of one word clashes with *x* at the opening of the next. Still more unpleasing is the hissing sound produced by the collision between a pair of these consonants, as in the phrase *ars studiorum*.") Quintilian. IX.iv.37: XXXVII. See Quintilian. (1921). *Institutio Oratoria* / *The institutio oratoria of Quintilian* (Vol. 3, H. E. Butler, Trans.). Harvard University Press; Heinemann, pp. 526–527.

In his *Hypomnematum Musicæ Poeticæ* (1599)[19] and *Musica αυτοσχεδιαστική* (1601),[20] he writes about the figure *symblema sive commissura*, employing the Greek designation alongside the Latin one. In 1601, when presenting his second doctrine of musical figures (containing the classification) immediately following the first, Burmeister excludes the Latin term *commissura*, retaining only the Greek *symblema*.[21] He follows the same approach in his final treatise on the doctrine of musical figures, *Musica poetica* (1606).[22]

The Musical Figures of Scheibe

The inertia of the principal figures remains perceptible even in the mid-18th-century catalogue proposed in the treatise *Critischer Musicus* (Leipzig, 1745[23]) by the Kapellmeister and music critic Johann Adolf Scheibe (1708–1776). At the conclusion of his article on figures — presented as an appendix rather than an independent section — he follows established tradition by listing figures derived from the rules of counterpoint:

Was endlich die Figuren betrifft, die insgemein von den Componisten dafür angesehen werden: so sind solche der Durchgang (*Transitus*) die Bindung, (*Ligatura* und *Syncopatio*, oder *Syncope*) und endlich belegen auch einige noch die Fuge, und den doppelten Contrapunct mit dem Namen der Figuren. Diese Arten der harmonischen Figuren

Finally, as for the figures that composers generally consider such, these include the figures of passing motion [*Durchgang*] (*Transitus*), binding [*Bindung*] (*Ligatura* and *Syncopatio*, or *Syncope*); and, lastly, some even call fugue and double counterpoint "figures." These varieties of harmonic figures

[19] Burmeister, J. (1599). *Hypomnematum Musicæ Poeticæ a Magistro Ioachimo Burmeistero, ex Isagoge cuius et idem ipse auctor est, ad chorum gubernandum, cantumque componendum conscripta, synopsis*. Myliander, Fol. H2.

[20] Burmeister, J. (1601). *Musica αυτοσχεδιαστική qvæ per aliquot accessiones in gratiam philomusorum quorundam ad tractatum de hypomnematibus musicæ poëticæ ejusdem auctoris sporadēn quondam exaratas, in unum corpusculum concrevit, in quâ redditur ratio I. Formandi & componendi harmonias; II. Administrandi & regendi chorum; III. Canendi melodias modô hactenùs non usitatô*. Edita studiô & labore M. Joachimi Burmeisteri Lunæburgensis. Reusnerianis, Fol. H2.

[21] Burmeister, 1601, Fol. K3.

[22] Burmeister, J. (1606). *Musica poetica: Definitionibus et divisionibus breviter delineata, quibus in singulis capitibus sunt hypomnemata præceptionum instar [synoptikōs]*. Myliander, p. 60.

[23] Scheibe, J. A. (1745). *Critischer Musicus*. Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf.

sind aber den Musikverständigen bekannt genug, daß ich also nicht nöthig habe, mich mit deren Erklärung allhier zu beschäfftigen. Außer diesen gehören sie eigentlich zu den allgemeinen und ersten Compositionsregeln, die ich in diesen Blättern zu erläutern nicht gesonnen bin. Ich überlasse vielmehr meinen Lesern obige Anmerkungen von den Figuren zu weiterm Nachdenken, als die den meisten unbekannter seyn werden, als alle übrige harmonische Regeln, welche die gemeine Zusammensetzung der Töne und Intervallen betreffen.[24]

are sufficiently well-known to those proficient in the musical art, so there is no need for me to address their explanation here. Moreover, they actually belong to the commonly known and primary rules of composition [*Compositionsregeln*], which I do not intend to explain on these pages. On the contrary, I shall leave the above remarks on figures for my readers' further reflection, as they will be less familiar to most than all the other harmonic rules [*harmonische Regeln*] concerning the treatment of sounds and intervals.

It is noteworthy that Scheibe adds German equivalents to the universally accepted Ancient Greek and Latin terms, seeking to emphasize the importance of employing national musical terminology. He explains the designations of the figures as follows:

Transitus, oder der Durchgang ist, wenn mehr als eine Note neben einander auf- oder absteigend gegen eine in einer andern Stimme befindliche Note zu stehen kommen. Die eine Note ist alsdann als die anschlagende, von der die Zusammenstimmung entsteht, anzusehen; die andere Note hingegen ist die durchgehende. Da aber auch sehr oft von der durchgehenden Note die Harmonie entspringt: so ist annoch zu merken, daß wenn die accentuirte Note, als die anschlagende, die Harmonie machet, solches *Transitus regulatis* genennet wird. Ist aber die unaccentuirte, oder die durchgehende Note der Grund der Harmonie: so heißt solches *Transitus irregularis*. In diesem letztern Falle aber ist die erstere Note, ob sie schon accentuirt ist, doch nur als ein Vorschlag der folgenden Note zu betrachten.[25]

The *Transitus*, or passing note occurs when two or more subsequent, neighboring, ascending or descending notes stand against one note in another voice. The note which forms the harmony is considered the striking [*anschlagende*] note, while the other is the passing note. However, as the harmony is also frequently derived out of the passing note, the following, moreover, is to be mentioned. When the accented or striking note produces the harmony, it is known as a *transitus regularis*. However, should the unaccented or passing note form the basis of the harmony, it is called a *transitus irregularis*. In this latter case, however, the first note. even if it is accented, is only to be considered as an accentus [*Vorschlag*] to the following note [4, pp. 426–427].

[24] Scheibe, 1745, pp. 698–699.
[25] Scheibe, 1745, p. 698.

Ligatura und *Syncopatio*, oder *Syncope*, die Bindung, ist, wenn aus zwo Noten eine gemachet wird, also daß wider die gewöhnliche Beschaffenheit oder Eintheilung des Taktes, eine accentuirte Note an die unaccentuirte Note gebunden ist. Diese Figur dienet der Dissonanzen angenehmer und lieblicher zu machen; wiewohl sie auch sehr oft nur bey den Consonanzen gebrauchet wird. Sonst nennet man sie auch eine zierliche Rückung des Taktes. Sie besteht aber insgemein aus drey Noten. Die erste Note ist unaccentuiret, die zweyte Note aber ist accentuiret, und kann also bald eine Consonanz bald auch eine Dissonanz seyn; die dritte Note ist, so wie die erste, unaccentuirent, und wird als die Auflösung der mittlern Note, welche an die erstere gebunden war, angesehen. Ist nun die gebundene Note eine Consonanz gewesen, so kann die Auflösung aufwärts oder springend geschehen; ist sie aber eine Dissonanz gewesen, so muß die Auflösung allemal eine Stufe niedriger, als die vorhergehende Note stehen. Diejenigen Anmerkungen, welche die Kunstverständigen wegen des Unterschiedes der Syncope und Ligatur insbesondere zu machen pflegen, sind allhier nicht nöthig, besonders angeführet zu werden, weil sie einem Liebhaber der Musik nichts helfen könen, einem Componisten aber aus den ersten Anfangsgründen bereits bekannt, an sich selbst aber nur Grillenfängereyen sind.[26]

The ligatura (*syncopatio* or *syncope*), the tie [*Bindung*], occurs when one note is constructed out of two by tying an accented note to an unaccented one against the normal structure or division of the beat. This figure actually serves to make the use of dissonances more agreeable and pleasant, although it is also often used only with consonances. It is furthermore also called a graceful shifting of the beat [4, pp. 404–405]. As a rule, it consists of three notes. The first note is unaccented, but the second is accented and may thus be either a consonance or a dissonance; the third note, like the first, is unaccented and is considered the resolution of the middle note that was tied to the first. If the tied note was a consonance, the resolution may be made by ascent or by a leap; if, however, it was a dissonance, the resolution must always be one step lower than the preceding note. The remarks that connoisseurs of the art are inclined to make regarding the difference between syncope and ligatura require no special explanation here, as they would be of no use to the music lover, are already known to the composer from the very beginning, and are, in themselves, mere hair-splitting.

It is no coincidence that Scheibe initially refers to *Durchgang* (passing motion) and *Bindung* (binding/suspension) as "figures," only to subsequently replace this definition with the term "rules" (*Compositionsregeln*,

[26] Scheibe, 1745, pp. 698–699. In the original text, the last sentence refers to "catching crickets" (*Grillenfängerei*). According to the Deutsches Wörterbuch by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the noun *Grillenfängerei* denotes abstruse, unfounded reasoning or whimsical brooding. Grillenfängerei. (n.d.). In *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*. Retrieved November 5, 2025, from https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/grillenfängerei.

harmonische Regeln). At first glance, such an approach does not seem to fit organically into his Gottschedian, affect-oriented concept of musical figures; however, it was necessitated by the established practice of the time.

Conclusion

The paradox of the phenomenon under consideration lies in the fact that the musical elements and techniques known in musicology as musical-rhetorical figures represent not only means of enhancing musical expressiveness but also purely compositional-technical devices.[27] They constitute the very foundation of mastering the composer's craft — namely, the norms of counterpoint. It is also evident that when employing dissonances on strong or weak beats, the musicians' primary objective was the observance of rules, rather than the opportunity to convey expression or illustrate specific images and ideas. Such figures — analogous to rhetorical ones and included in the corresponding lists — can, in the words of Siegfried Oechsle, be legitimately viewed as "a kind of terminological buffer for the history of counterpoint" („als eine Art terminologischer Zwischenspeicher der Kontrapunktgeschichte") [16, p. 10].

In the lists of musical figures, the choice of both terminology and the actual sonic material led to heterogeneity and a rhizomatic structure. As Gottfried Scholz points out, the authors of the treatises „sie alle aber bereiteten durch den rhetorischen Begriffswirrwarr Angriffsflächen für später vor. Durch die wachsende Affektenlehre, durch Systematiken von Athanasius Kircher bis Johann Mattheson erhielt die musikalische Rhetorik…, verhädderte sich aber gleichzeitig in einer wirklichkeitsfremden, ausufernden Terminologie" [17, S. 36].

Thus, in the process of forming the lists of figures, both old and new techniques of compositional practice were selected. These lists contained not only a "rhetorical" element, signifying a violation of the norm (according to

[27] Another significant component that the authors of treatises frequently classify as figures analogous to rhetorical ones are the manners (*Manieren*) and diminution techniques derived from performance practice.

Quintilian's definition of a figure[28]), but also a "grammatical" one, intended to codify this norm.[29] In the words of Mikhail L. Gasparov, ever since the Middle Ages "the common denominator between grammar and rhetoric was the study of elocutio, or artistic delivery: long lists of tropes and figures serving to ornament such delivery were equally included in both the Rhetorica ad Herennium and the grammar of Donatus" [18, p. 60].

The juxtaposition of strict counterpoint rules and their violations within certain lists of figures demonstrates the processes of the "gradual rhetorization of musical language,"[30] establishing a coordinate system where "rhetoricality" is defined by its non-normative nature. At the same time, an examination of the figure inventories by Nucius, Thuringus, Kircher, Bernhard, Janovka, Walther, and Scheibe reveals that not every author ventured to explain "liberties" without first describing the norm.

A detailed study of the genesis of musical-rhetorical figures leads to a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon and to a more expansive historical perspective. This perspective should replace the established practice of viewing these figures exclusively from intonational-semantic and symbolic viewpoints. Moving away from such practice is intended to contribute to the demystification of Baroque rhetoric in musicology.

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[28] According to Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, "a *figure*, on the other hand, as is clear from the name itself, is the term employed when we give our language a conformation other than the obvious and ordinary." Quintilian, 1921, p. 351.

[29] During Antiquity, "the goal of rhetoric was the triple skill to 'persuade,' 'delight,' and 'move' the listener. The goal of grammar was the more modest skill of 'writing and speaking correctly,' as well as 'interpreting the poets." [18, p. 592].

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The article was submitted 16.12.2025; approved after reviewing 26.01.2026; accepted for publication 11.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 16.12.2025; одобрена после рецензирования 26.01.2026; принята к публикации 11.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Technique of Musical Composition

Original artical
UDC 78.021.4
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-033-053
EDN LMDOBM

Allusive quotations in music: typology and forms of representation

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Abstract. The article addresses the classification of quotation-allusions and the mechanisms of primary source representation within them. The author highlights the complexities involved in studying this phenomenon and presents various scholarly perspectives on the concept of "allusion." Three distinct types of quotation-allusions are identified: (1) those based on a minimal element of the donor text, such as a single chord or motif (e.g., the quotation of the "longing" leitmotif from Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* in Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring*); (2) those borrowing only a single parameter,

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such as a rhythmic pattern (e.g., *Ça ira* in Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*); and (3) those involving the reproduction of the entire musical fabric, albeit with significant modifications to all its components (e.g., the sleep leitmotif from Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* in Anton Bruckner's Third Symphony). Specific examples are used to examine the representative properties of harmony, which can be manifested through: unique vertical structures (e.g., the quotation from Arnold Schoenberg's *Farben* in Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*); specific chord progressions (the *folia* in André Grétry's opera *Les fausses apparences, ou L'amant jaloux*); and, finally, texture (the funeral march from Frédéric Chopin's Piano Sonata No. 2 in Vivian Fine's opera *The Woman in the Garden*). The study demonstrates that the context of their appearance, including non-musical elements, is crucial for the attribution and analysis of quotation-allusions. Furthermore, the author highlights the significant role of such structures in 20th and 21st-century music, drawing parallels between their interpretation and the methods of deconstruction and recomposition. The conclusions formulate the specificities of perceiving such quotations, which ultimately define their artistic potential.

Keywords: musical quotation, allusion, representation, attribution, context, deconstruction, recomposition

For citation: Denisov, A. V. (2026). Allusive quotations in music: typology and forms of representation. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 33–53. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-033-053

Техника музыкальной композиции

Научная статья

Цитаты-аллюзии в музыке: типология и формы репрезентации

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Аннотация. В статье рассматривается проблема классификации цитат-аллюзий, а также механизмы репрезентации в них первоисточников. Отмечены сложности в исследовании этого явления, приведены точки зрения разных авторов в отношении понятия «аллюзия». Разграничиваются три типа цитат-аллюзий: основанные на минимальном по масштабу элементе текста-донора, вплоть до одного аккорда или мотива (цитата лейтмотива томления из «Тристана и Изольды» Рихарда Вагнера в «Альберте Херринге» Бенжамина Бриттена); заимствующие только один его параметр, например, ритмический рисунок (*Ça ira* в «Диалогах кармелиток» Франсиса Пуленка); предполагающие воспроизведение полного объема ткани, но со значительными изменениями всех компонентов, (лейтмотив сна из

«Валькирии» Вагнера в Третьей симфонии Антона Брукнера). На конкретных примерах рассмотрены репрезентативные свойства гармонии, которые могут реализовываться благодаря особенностям структуры вертикали (цитата из *Farben* Арнольда Шенберга в «Воццеке» Альбана Берга); специфическому сочетанию аккордов (фолия в опере Андре Гретри «Неверные понятия, или Завистливый любовник»); наконец, фактуре (траурный марш Сонаты № 2 для фортепиано Фредерика Шопена в опере Вивиан Файн «Женщина в саду»). Показано, что при атрибуции и анализе цитат-аллюзий особенно важна роль контекста их появления, в том числе внемузыкального. Отмечается особая роль цитат-аллюзий в музыке XX–XXI веков, параллели между их трактовкой и методами деконструкции и рекомпозиции. Сформулированы выводы в отношении специфики восприятия подобных цитат, определяющие их художественный потенциал.

Ключевые слова: цитата, аллюзия, репрезентация, атрибуция, контекст, деконструкция, рекомпозиция

Для цитирования: *Денисов А. В.* Цитаты-аллюзии в музыке: типология и формы репрезентации // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 33–53. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-033-053

Introduction

The term "quotation-allusion" refers to a type of quotation whose primary source is subtly discernible or faint. Such instances are frequent in musical practice. It is difficult to find a listener who has not experienced the effect of "balanced recognition" — when echoes of familiar works suddenly glide through an unfamiliar composition. This phenomenon is primarily characteristic of artistic texts, whereas in scholarly works, the boundary between one's own statement and that of another is clearly demarcated. Summarizing a fragment of the latter or paraphrasing someone else's idea without referencing the source is unacceptable and is considered improper appropriation.

In artistic creation, however, a quotation allows for modifications, sometimes within quite significant limits. In the art of music, the degree of its discernibility varies — ranging from the highest possible level[1]. to an extremely low one, where it is almost no longer perceived as a quotation. This explains the considerable difficulties inherent in studying quotation-allusions: it is particularly challenging to establish criteria for the author's intentionality (conscious versus unconscious use), as well as the underlying reasons for and the nature of the primary source's transformation.

Initially, the concept of "allusion" was used in the field of philology. Vasily P. Moskvin defines it as a "verbal hint at a work known to the addressee" and distinguishes two types of means for expressing such a hint. The first type involves "an individual word or a variation of a word capable of providing an associative 'link' to a specific precedent text" (for example, an author's neologisms). The second type consists of "a series of single-word units that do not reflect the component, positional, or grammatical structure of the original textual fragment." An example of the latter can be found in Valentin Gaft's epigram on the actor Andrey Myagkov, which plays on the title of the film *The Irony of Fate* (*Ironiya sudby*): "Had there been no 'irony' in fate, we would never have known of you" [1, pp. 37–38].

[1] It should be noted that an absolutely exact quotation is a relatively rare phenomenon in musical art (among the examples is *Musical Offering* by Rodion Shchedrin, which contains quotations from the chorale preludes of Johann Sebastian Bach, *Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten*).

Ksenia R. Novozhilova proposes a slightly different perspective on the study of allusion, noting that "allusion is a rhetorical figure that refers to the objective situation of other texts. [...] An allusion is expressed through a hidden, anonymous quotation and contains a hint at a literary or general cultural fact that belongs to the thesaurus of both the author and the reader" [2, p. 84].

In the art of music, scholars have addressed the study of allusions relatively infrequently. Aside from the well-known work by Alfred G. Schnittke [3] and an article by Anna P. Grutsynova [4], notable contributions include studies dedicated to the formalized computer analysis of musical allusions [5], as well as research on their role in specific compositions (see, for example, the section *Choral Parlando as Chant Allusion* in [6]). At the same time, the mechanisms of their formation, their functioning within the text, and the process of their perception remain unclear. This article aims, first, to distinguish characteristic types of quotation-allusions and, second, to demonstrate the specificities of primary source representation within them.

Typical Cases of Quotation-Allusions

Typical cases of quotation-allusions may arise in several distinct scenarios:

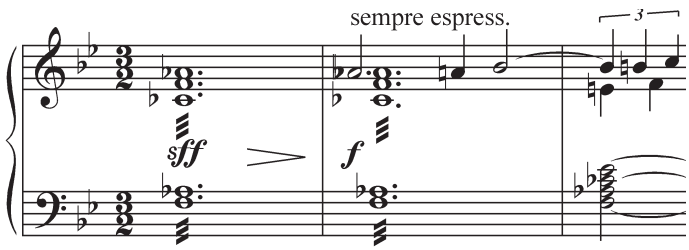
• Minimal Syntactic Element: Only a minimal syntactic element of the primary source is preserved (as small as a single chord or motif). Its recognizability as a quotation is ensured by the characteristic representative features of the source, such as its specific timbre-textural design or harmonic language.

• Parameter Isolation: Only a single parameter of the musical fabric (for example, the rhythmic pattern or pitch contours) is retained, while all other components are completely renewed.

• Comprehensive Transformation: All components of the musical text within the quotation are altered, with the scale of these modifications affecting at least half of its structure (i.e., no less than 50% of its total duration).

An example of the first scenario is the quotation of the "longing" (*Sehnsucht*) leitmotif from Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* in Act II, Scene 1 of Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring*. These quotations serve an explicitly parodic purpose: Sid spikes the lemonade with alcohol, which the protagonist then drinks (*Example 1*), unaware of the substitution. This evokes the plot of *Tristan und Isolde*,

where the protagonists consume a love potion believing it to be poison.[2] Britten quotes only the chord from the second measure of the leitmotif, omitting both its initial monophonic opening and its eventual resolution. At the same time, the primary source remains recognizable due to its characteristic ascending chromatic motion. Britten exaggerates this motion with clear irony, extending it through an accelerating rhythm (distributed simultaneously across several voices) as if portraying the protagonist's growing intoxication. The grotesque nature of the quotation is further amplified by the fact that the opera's overall style is fundamentally anti-Wagnerian, a contrast that extends to its plot and dramaturgical structure alike.



Example 1. Benjamin Britten. *Albert Herring*, Act II, Scene I, sec. 46, bars 1–3

An illustration of the second scenario is the quotation of the famous motif *Ça ira* in Francis Poulenc's opera *Dialogues des Carmélites* (*Example 2*). Only the rhythmic pattern of the original source remains: the chorus (representing the street mob) sharply chants the opening words of the quotation. Nevertheless, this alone proves sufficient to ensure recognizability. Its significance is more than evident, as the opera is set during the Jacobin Terror in France. Here, the *Ça ira* quotation appears as a distorted echo of the primary source, serving as a grim reminder of the tragic revolutionary events that ultimately claim the lives of Poulenc's protagonists.[3]

[2] Regarding this quotation in Britten's work, see also [7]. According to the author of that study, the significance of this quotation lies in the fact that it "undermines conventional expectations regarding [the feeling of] love" [7, p. 165]. It should be recalled that in the opera, the chaste Albert, after consuming the alcoholic cocktail, later witnesses a tryst between Nancy and Sid and decides to experience all the pleasures of life for himself.

[3] The quotation occurs at the end of Act II. Blanche drops a figurine of the Little King of Glory (*le Petit Roi de Gloire*), shattering it, and exclaims: "Ah! The Little King is dead! Nothing is left to us but the Lamb of God!" (*Ah! le petit Roi est mort! Il ne nous reste plus que l'Agneau de Dieu!*). This act serves as a proclamation of the loss of religious values during the Revolution and foreshadows the impending martyrdom of the opera's protagonists.



Example 2. Francis Poulenc. *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Act II, Scene IV, sec. 88, bar 1

In John Corigliano's opera *The Ghosts of Versailles*, one of the leitmotifs utilizes the pitch contours of Cherubino's aria from Act II of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*) (*Example 3*). This quotation-allusion, much like other explicit quotations in the work, is motivated by the opera's plot: Beaumarchais decides to stage a play titled *A Figaro for Antonia* for the ghosts of Louis XVI's court, intended to alter the fate of the executed Marie Antoinette. The play incorporates situations from Beaumarchais's famous trilogy, including those involving Figaro himself.

A highly unusual example of a quotation-allusion is found in Boris I. Tishchenko's operetta *Tarakanishche* (*A Cockroach*), set to the verses of Korney I. Chukovsky. The famous song *Suliko* is heard repeatedly throughout the work (see No. 9, *Chorus of Animals*, and No. 10, *Scene*). Notably, in No. 10 (Rehearsal Nos. 63–64), its pitch contours are combined with the rhythmic pattern of the opening phrase of the song *Wide is My Motherland* (*Shiroka strana moya rodnaya*). This resemblance is reinforced by the use of the initial fourth interval (V–I) (*Example 4*). Furthermore, the vibraphone timbre used for the threefold repetition of this quotation explicitly evokes the call signs of the All-Union Radio.[4] In the operetta, these musical gestures accompany the chorus's words: "Bring me, oh beasts, your little children / I shall eat them for my supper tonight!"

[4] It should be noted that Isaak O. Dunayevsky's song was previously used in a similar manner in Dmitri Shostakovich's symphonic poem *Oktyabr'* [*October*].



Example 3. John Corigliano. *The Ghosts of Versailles*, Act II, Finale, sec. 117, bars 1–2, the first violin part



Example 4. Boris Tishchenko. *A Cockroach*, No. 10, sec. 63, bars 1–3, part of vibraphone

Chukovsky's contemporaries were inclined to perceive a political subtext in his fairy tale, interpreting the protagonist as a parody of Joseph Stalin.[5] For his part, the composer noted in a 2009 interview:

> I used satire as much as I could — "with all my might." In *Tarakanishche*, for instance, the figure of Stalin is portrayed; he hums *Suliko*. When I showed *Tarakanishche* to Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich [...], he told me: "Well, *Suliko*, *Suliko*... It is a good song, after all; it is not to blame for being loved by a tyrant" [8, p. 40].[6]

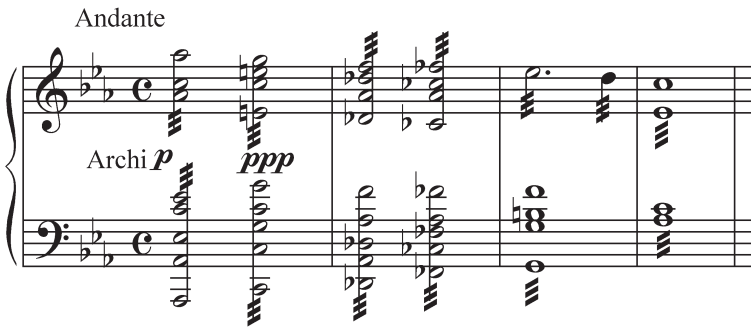
At the same time, the explicit satirical allusion to Stalin's persona in the operetta inevitably lost its immediacy over time. Nikita S. Khrushchev's famous report, *On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences*, had been presented as early as 1956, and following the author's dismissal, the process of de-Stalinization lost its formerly radical character.

The third scenario occurs at the end of the slow movement of Anton Bruckner's Third Symphony — a work dedicated to Richard Wagner — featuring the sleep leitmotif from *Die Walküre*. The modifications encompass texture, rhythm, syntax,

[5] See, for example, the story *Tarakanishche* (*A Cockroach*) by Evgenia S. Ginzburg from her book *Krutoy marshrut* (*Journey into the Whirlwind*), and Chukovsky's conversation with Emmanuil G. Kazakevich on March 9, 1956. Chukovsky, K. I. (1994). *Dnevnik (1930–1969)* [Diary (1930–1969)]. Sovetskiy pisatel, p. 237.

[6] Tishchenko notes that he only became acquainted with *Rayok* (*Antiformalist Rayok*), where Shostakovich had utilized the song *Suliko* in the same capacity, after the composer's death.

and harmony (*Examples 5 and 6*). Nevertheless, the resemblance to the original remains noticeable, even if it is never strictly exact. It should be recalled that while *Die Walküre* was completed in 1856, fragments from Acts I and III were performed in Vienna in 1862 under the composer's direction. Judging by the nature of the primary source's transformation in the quotation, Bruckner likely reconstructed it from memory following that performance. The logic of the vertical structures and the melodic exposition remains consistent with the original, yet their specific realization resembles an "oral retelling."

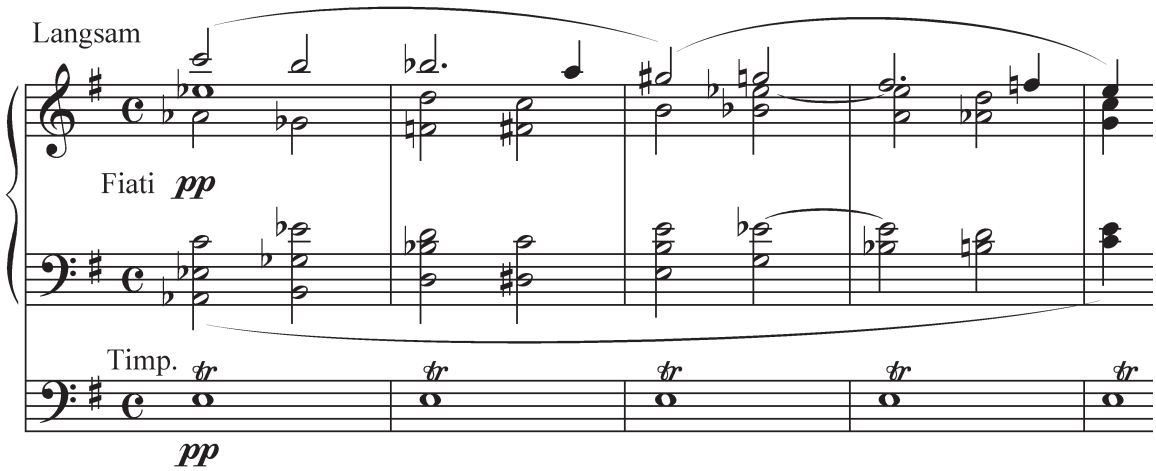


Example 5. Anton Bruckner. *Symphony No. 3* (third edition), second movement, bars 209–212

It is pertinent to add that Bruckner, as a rule, avoided explicit quotation, and this instance serves as an exception in his oeuvre.[7] Out of reverence for his idol, he chose to clearly indicate his dedication; yet even this gesture remained blurred, resembling a spectral vision. In the second and third editions of the symphony, the quotation is played by the strings *tremolo* — a method of exposition that Wagner does not employ in the original source.[8]

[7] Julian Horton points out the use of quotations from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (the *Liebestod* leitmotif) and *Die Walküre* (the sleep leitmotif) in the first movement (1873 version, bars 461–488), alongside a quotation from Bruckner's own Second Symphony that was retained in subsequent revisions [9, pp. 186–187]. On the subject of quotations in the first version, see also [10]. It is possible that the reduction in the number of quotations in the later version stems precisely from the fact that the initial version of the symphony contained, for the composer, an excessive amount of them.

[8] In the first version, Bruckner employs a chorale-like texture without *tremolo* — in this form, the leitmotif appears in Wagner's *Die Walküre* immediately following its statement by the woodwinds. This suggests that in subsequent revisions the composer intentionally chose to diminish the degree of resemblance to the primary source.



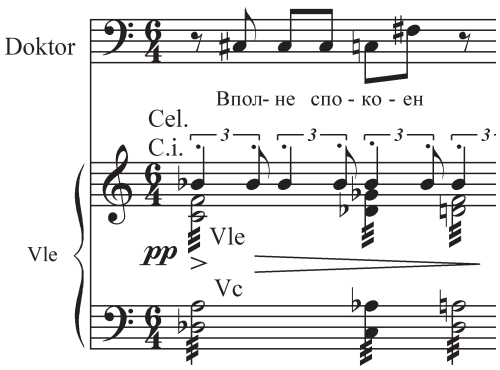
Example 6. Richard Wagner. *Die Walküre*, Act III, the sleep leitmotif (first occurrence after Wotan's words — „Gottheit von dir!")

Specific Properties of Quotation-Allusions

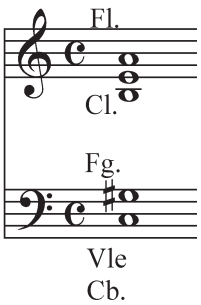
The representative qualities of quotation-allusions can be ensured by various parameters of the musical fabric — rhythm, timbre-textural design, or harmony. Occasionally, this role is played by distinct melodic figures inscribed into a renewed general context. An example of this is the phrase set to the words "to dreams and years there is no return" (*mechtam i godam net vozvrata*) from Onegin's aria *Were I a man whom fate intended* (*Kogda by zhizn domashnim krugom*) in Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, which appears in Act I, Scene 3 of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (Rehearsal No. 168, bars 1–5).[9]

Particular emphasis should be placed on the role of harmony, as its unique characteristics often prove to be the most effective in the process of identifying a primary source. It is precisely through the specific chordal structure that one can attribute the quotation from Arnold Schoenberg's orchestral piece *Farben* (*Colors*) in Act I, Scene 4 of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* (*Examples 7, 8*). It is possible

[9] Its parodic significance is revealed through the juxtaposition of both the textual content of the quotations (Onegin: "to dreams and years there is no return" — Sergey: "well, let's say there was someone on the side") and the dramatic contexts of the two operas as a whole. In Tchaikovsky's work, Onegin rejects Tatyana's love, whereas in Shostakovich's opera, Sergey aggressively solicits Katerina's affection.



Example 7. Alban Berg. *Wozzeck*, Act I, Scene IV, bar 520



Example 8. Arnold Schoenberg. *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, op. 16, No. 3 (*Farben*), bar 1 (harmonic scheme)

that this instance — much like the self-quotation from his own *Three Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 6, in Scene 2 of the same act — may carry a hidden autobiographical meaning.[10] Work on *Wozzeck* began at the same time as the completion of Op. 6, a work dedicated to Schoenberg and created during Berg's formative years as a composer. It is significant that the quotation from this work occurs as Wozzeck says he feels the earth trembling beneath his feet. Berg himself noted similarities between his own personality and that of the opera's protagonist. Meanwhile, the quotation of the first chord from Schoenberg's Op. 16 appears when the Doctor, following a sudden outburst, informs Wozzeck that he is not "angry" at all and is "perfectly *calm*" [emphasis added — *A. D.*].

[10] The brief duration of the fragments used and the nature of the material itself suggest that the composer likely did not intend for the primary sources to be immediately recognizable.

Schoenberg's initial impression of Berg's Op. 6 was far from enthusiastic; in a letter to his pupil dated September 20, 1914, he remarked upon the work:

> Ueber Ihr Werk kann ich Ihnen aber leider vorläufig nichts sagen. Ich hab zwar schon öfters hineingesehen, aber Sie werden ja selbst wissen, wie schwer es ist, sich aus so komplicierten Noten ein Bild zu machen und Sie werden begreifen, dass mir in dieser Zeit auch die Ruhe fehlt.[11]

The relationship between the two musicians remained strained for a long time, complicated by the teacher's critical remarks. However, Schoenberg later came to hold the composition in high regard.[12]

An example of a characteristic chord progression is found in the quotation of the *folia* in André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry's opera *Les fausses apparences, ou L'amant jaloux* (*False Appearances, or The Jealous Lover*). In the quartet concluding Act I, Don Alonzo unjustly accuses Leonora of infidelity (*Example 9*). Thus, in addition to characterizing the setting (Spain),[13] the *folia* here carries a second meaning: the "jealous passion" consuming the opera's protagonist. Notably, the metrorhythmic and melodic design bears no resemblance to the *folia*; only the harmony remains (though Grétry modifies even this in the cadences of both periods).

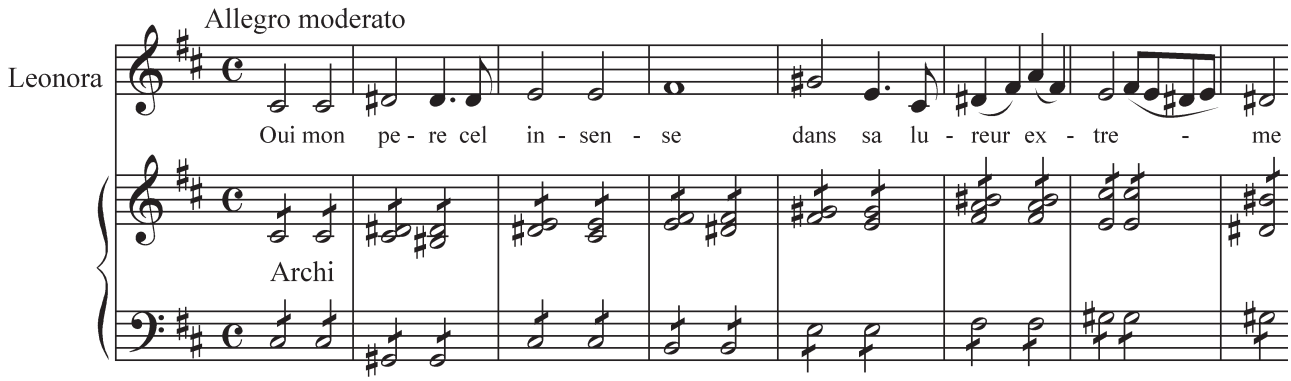
Another example is the fourth scene of Vivian Fine's opera *The Woman in the Garden*, which contains a quotation-allusion to the slow movement of Frédéric Chopin's Piano Sonata No. 2 (*Example 10*). It appears during the words of Isadora Duncan, who is mourning her deceased children: "Oh why should my Mama be so sad and so sorry?" Here, recognizability is ensured by both the harmonic progression (although the second chord is modified — VI⁶ instead of VI⁶4) and the characteristic register and timbre of the piano.

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[11] Schoenberg, A. (1914, September 20). Letter to Alban Berg (ID 433). *Arnold Schönberg Center Archive*. Retrieved February 20, 2026, from https://archive.schoenberg.at/letters/letters.php?id_letters=433&action=view&sortieren=id%20DESC&vonBis=860-879

[12] Schoenberg, A. (1964). Letter to Josef Stransky, August 23, 1922. In E. Stein (Ed.), *Arnold Schoenberg letters* (E. Wilkins, & E. Kaiser, Trans.) (pp. 71–72). Faber and Faber.

[13] Grétry himself also wrote about the use of this dance in such a capacity, specifically in relation to the number *Le mariage est une envie* from Act II, Scene 3. See Grétry, A.-E.-M. (1797). *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique* (Vol. 1). Imprimerie de la République, pluviôse, An V, pp. 323–324.



Example 9. André Gretry. *Les fausses apparences, ou L'amant jaloux*, Act I, Scene 11, quartet, bars 121–128



Example 10. Vivian Fine. *Woman in the Garden*, Scene 4, bars 427–429, piano part

When attributing a quotation-allusion, the specific context accompanying its appearance is of vital importance. In Act II, Scene 1 of Berg's *Lulu*, an allusion to the leitmotif of longing (*Sehnsucht*) from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* occurs (*Example 11*). However, it is represented only by its opening chord; all other components are absent. At the same time, the beginning of the leitmotif is accompanied by Alwa's line: "Mignon, I *love* you..." [*emphasis added — A. D.*]. Furthermore, as Yulia S. Veksler has demonstrated through an analysis of the *particello* manuscript, "Berg considered the possibility of quoting not only the Tristan chord but the entire longing motif" [12, p. 90]. Thus, the initial structural plan was subsequently reduced, and the explicit quotation was transformed into an allusion.

Another expressive example is the self-quotation from the opening of the Second Violin Sonata in Schnittke's *Lebenslauf* (*A Life's Course*) (*Example 12*). It consists of a single G-minor chord. The conceptual design of the composition aids in identifying this quotation: it functions as a unique musical autobiography where almost all self-quotations appear according to a chronological principle.[14] Within this sequence, the chord in question fits precisely into the overall context: *Dialogue for Cello Solo and Seven Instruments* (1965), *Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano* (1968), and *Symphony No. 1* (1972).



Example 11. Alban Berg. *Lulu*, Act II, Scene I, bars 335–336



Example 12. Alfred Schnittke. *Lebenslauf*, section 34, bar 3, part of xylophone

[14] Another example of the use of self-quotation-allusions — which, by all appearances, carry an autobiographical meaning — is the finale of Shostakovich's *Sonata for Viola and Piano*, which contains thematic elements from several of his own symphonies [13, pp. 43–44].

Conclusion

In summary, the degree of recognizability of quotation-allusions is characterized by significant variability. Broadly speaking, it is determined by two factors.

The first factor is the differentiation of the quoted material in relation to the surrounding original text. This differentiation may be low, where the quotation is not stylistically or structurally distinct from its context (*Examples 3, 7, 11*), or high, where its boundaries are clearly audible (*Examples 2, 4, 12*). Occasionally, this contrast manifests within only a single parameter. In Example 10, the original material preserves the principles of the source's timbre-textural design while the harmony undergoes renewal.

The second factor relates to the presentation of the primary source itself — the scale and nature of its modifications, as well as the number of statements (it is common for musical quotations to be repeated multiple times). Various components of a musical text may possess differing degrees of stability within the recipient's working memory, influenced by the material's duration and its structural simplicity or complexity. Furthermore, the mutual coordination of these components within the organization of the quotation's fabric can vary. For instance, in the quotation from Ludwig van Beethoven's cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* in the third movement of the first version of Johannes Brahms's Piano Trio No. 1 (mm. 146–151), the pitch contours of the melody are preserved almost exactly, while the accompaniment retains only the general functional harmonic positions of the original.[15]

In the art of music quotation-allusions gained particular prominence during the 19th and 20th centuries.[16] This is no coincidence: beginning in the 19th century, composers increasingly adopted an extremely liberal attitude toward the primary source, paraphrasing it arbitrarily. Occasionally, its recognizability becomes entirely secondary for them. A striking example is Helmut Lachenmann's *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (Dance Suite with German National Anthem), where Haydn's famous melody — a state symbol with a complex history — is "discredited" through fragmentation into minute elements that are integrated into the instrumental fabric [14, p. 296][17].

[15] For more details, see [11, pp. 11–12].

[16] Some composers (for instance, Berg) employed them with particular frequency, while others used them far more selectively (e.g., Edward Elgar).

[17] For more details, see [15].

Consequently, the original becomes impossible to identify, leading to the perception of the work's title as an explicit provocation: "The title is intentionally misleading: it is not a suite, there is no dance music, and there are no perceivable elements of the German national anthem — at least, not on a conscious level" [16, p. 61] (see also [17]).

A similar nature of primary source deconstruction can be observed in the works of various authors, including Karel Goeyvaerts's *Ach Golgatha!* and, in the 19th century, Fernando Garnero's *Ragtime* (*Avoidances III*). A related (though not identical) phenomenon occurs in recomposition, which is based on a creatively free dialogue between the author and a musical text from a different era. As a result, the "self–other" dichotomy becomes mobile, losing its clear boundaries, as does the degree of recognizability of the original version. This phenomenon fully aligns with the creative stances of 20th- and 21st-century composers, who increasingly find themselves in a zone of instability when defining the boundaries of personal responsibility.

Beyond the strictly technical aspect relevant to the composer and the analyst, quotation-allusions undoubtedly present challenges for musical perception as well. The process of the auditory attribution of such quotations can take on various forms — ranging from an intricate intellectual game to a symbolist hint at an almost elusive vision of "Other I." As psychologists note, such ambiguity creates significant prerequisites for co-creation:

> The assimilation of a recommendation with an ambiguous formulation is facilitated by an individual's own activity in processing information presented as a hint or in an indirect form, where it becomes necessary to guess or further define what has been perceived. By giving the advice a personal, subjectively acceptable, and finished form — investing their own effort into understanding and shaping the recommendation — the individual feels like a co-author of the idea… [18, p. 68].

The ambiguity of allusion recognition presents the listener with a choice: whether to interpret what they hear as a quotation or not. This choice is typically subconscious, appealing to intuition rather than rational thinking. Yet, within this precarious balancing act lies the undeniable artistic potential of the phenomenon under consideration, in which the reference to the primary source takes on the character of a hidden code — one that, moreover, possesses multiple semantic dimensions.

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The article was submitted 14.01.2026;
approved after reviewing 13.02.2026;
accepted for publication 11.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 14.01.2026;
одобрена после рецензирования 13.02.2026;
принята к публикации 11.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Musical Theatre

Original article
UDC 782.91
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-054-074
EDN OFKAEJ

Pantomimes in the repertoire of the *Crooked Mirror* Miniature Theater: From theory to practice

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Abstract. Pantomime can rightfully be considered one of the most innovative and sought-after theatrical genres of the Silver Age. Iconic productions of the 1910s, such as Vsevolod Meyerhold's *Columbine's Scarf* (1910, House of Interludes) and Alexander Tairov's *The Veil of Pierrette* (first staged in 1913 at the Moscow Free Theater)—both based on Arthur Schnitzler's play with music by Ernst von Dohnányi—resonated deeply within Russia's artistic and theatrical circles.

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Translated by Irina G. Latysheva

Theater scholar Vadim Shcherbakov links the premiere of *Columbine's Scarf* to the appearance of Nikolai Evreinov's pantomime *Fiametta's Four Dead Men* (1911) in the repertoire of the *Crooked Mirror* theater. However, an analysis of the theater's repertoire and of programmatic articles by its artistic director, Alexander Kugel, from the late 1900s and early 1910s, suggests that the theater approached the genre of pantomime gradually, systematically accumulating both theoretical and practical experience. Actual pantomime in the *Crooked Mirror* repertoire was preceded by performances utilizing silhouette techniques (*Polka in the Style of Béranger*, *Near the Ballet in the Old Days*), the mimodrama Pierrot in Love, and the staging of the Arabian fairy tale *On the Six Beauties Who Were Not Like One Another*. This article aims to provide a brief characterization of the *Crooked Mirror's* "pre-pantomime experiments" leading up to 1911.

Keywords: Alexander R. Kugel, Nikolai N. Evreinov, Vsevolod E. Meyerhold, the Theater of miniatures *Crooked Mirror*, *Fiametta's Four Dead Men*, *Columbine's Scarf*, pantomime

For citation: Enukidze, N. I. (2026). Pantomimes in the repertoire of the *Crooked Mirror* Miniature Theater: From theory to practice. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 54–74. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-054-074

Музыкальный театр

Научная статья

Пантомимы в репертуаре театра миниатюр «Кривое зеркало»: от теории к практике

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Аннотация. Пантомиму можно по праву считать одним из наиболее новаторских и востребованных театральных жанров Серебряного века. Знаковые постановки 1910-х годов «Шарф Коломбины» Всеволода Эмильевича Мейерхольда (1910, «Дом интермедий») и «Покрывало Пьеретты» Александра Яковлевича Таирова (впервые — 1913, «Свободный театр»), обе по пьесе Артура Шницлера на музыку Эрнеста Донаньи, вызвали в художественной и театральной среде России огромный резонанс. С первой из них («Шарф Коломбины») театровед Вадим Анатольевич Щербаков связывает появление в репертуаре «Кривого зеркала» пантомимы Николая Николаевича Евреинова «Четыре мертвеца Фьяметты» (1911). Однако анализ

репертуара «Зеркала», а также программные статьи его художественного руководителя Александра Рафаиловича Кугеля конца 1900-х — начала 1910-х годов свидетельствуют, что к жанру пантомимы театр подходил постепенно, активно накапливая теоретический и практический опыт. Собственно пантомиме в репертуаре «Зеркала» предшествовали номера, выполненные в технике силуэта («Полька в стиле Беранже», «Около балета в старину»), мимодрама «Влюбленный Пьеро» и инсценировка арабской сказки «О шести красавицах, не похожих друг на друга». Краткая характеристика этого «предпантомимного эксперимента» «Кривого зеркала» до 1911 года и составляет задачу настоящей статьи.

Ключевые слова: А. Р. Кугель, Н. Н. Евреинов, Вс. Э. Мейерхольд, театр миниатюр «Кривое зеркало», «Четыре мертвеца Фьяметты», «Шарф Коломбины», пантомима

Для цитирования: *Енукидзе Н. И.* Пантомимы в репертуаре театра миниатюр «Кривое зеркало»: от теории к практике // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 54–74.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-054-074

Introduction

In recent decades, the history and artistic practices of Russian cabarets and theaters of miniatures have increasingly drawn the attention of Russian scholars. The primary focus of this interest lies in the heritage of leading small-form theaters: Moscow's *The Bat* (*La Chauve-Souris*) and St. Petersburg's *The Crooked Mirror* and *The Stray Dog*. Theater historians, philologists, and cultural studies experts examine these institutions to identify the specific features of Russian cabaret models in relation to their foreign prototypes [1, pp. 19–26], analyze individual plays from the repertoire [2] and genres [3, pp. 47–55], and reconstruct both the events of cabaret life [4, pp. 79–110] and the biographies of its participants [5, pp. 232–252].

Publications edited by Nora Buks have become an invaluable source of information for researchers: *Russian Entertainment Culture of the Silver Age* [6], *Cabaret Plays of the Silver Age* [7], *Theatrical Miniatures of the Silver Age* [8], and *History of the Silver Age Cabaret* [9]. The first of these is a collective monograph, while the other three are primarily dedicated to the publication of the cabaret repertoire; however, they also contain extensive factual material, including memoirs, articles from the periodical press, biographical sketches, and much more.

The authors and editors focus on a wide variety of genres, primarily dramatic miniatures and parodies, as well as couplets, poems, and cabaret songs. Perhaps the only genre that has been almost entirely overlooked by scholars is the dramatic pantomime, which occupied a modest but significant place in the repertoire of small-form theaters. The only exception in this scholarly landscape is the monograph by Vadim Shcherbakov, which includes a chapter dedicated to a landmark pantomime at the *Crooked Mirror—Fiametta's Four Dead Men* [10, pp. 77–96].

The present article aims to partially fill this gap; it examines the history of theoretical reflection and the creative practice of pantomime at the *Crooked Mirror* theater prior to 1911.

The First Pantomime Experiments at the Crooked Mirror

On September 18, 1911, the *Crooked Mirror* theater of miniatures hosted a new premiere: the pantomime *Fiametta's Four Dead Men*, directed

by Nikolai Evreinov with music by Dmitry Bigday. The emergence of this production was undoubtedly linked to the heightened interest in the language of movement and its potential, observed in Russian theatrical culture in the early 1910s. During this period, Alexander Kugel (the artistic director of the *Crooked Mirror*), along with critics Sergei S. Goloushev (also known as Sergei Glagol'), Eduard Stark (writing under the pseudonym Siegfried), and others, repeatedly advocated for limiting or even entirely abandoning the spoken word in order to approach the immanent properties of theater and performance. However, according to Vadim Shcherbakov, the "first practical argument" in the debate between "theatricality" (*teatralnost'*) and "literariness" (*literaturchina*)[1] was Vsevolod Meyerhold's sensational production of Arthur Schnitzler's play with music by Ernst von Dohnányi—*Columbine's Scarf* (*House of Interludes*, 1910).

Meyerhold's production emerged at the intersection of two major trends in early 20th-century Russian art. The first was the aforementioned interest in movement and plastic expression (*plastika*); the second was the revitalization of *commedia dell'arte* characters, references to which were pervasive in the poetry, drama, and painting of the period. As Natalya Kirillova rightly observes, "...the cult of the mask proved consonant with the modernization processes of Russia's socio-cultural sphere and the prevailing sentiments among the creative intelligentsia at the turn of the 20th century" [11].

Columbine's Scarf firmly linked the genre of pantomime with the "mask plot,"[2] giving rise to various iterations in the theatrical practice of the Russian Silver Age. Typically, this lineage includes the pantomime *The Veil of Pierrette*—also based on Arthur Schnitzler's play[3] with music by Ernst von Dohnányi—staged

[1] For more details on this debate, see [12, pp. 33–76].

[2] The role of the mask theme in Meyerhold's work has repeatedly been the subject of research by both Russian and international scholars. Among the publications, including those from recent years, we should note the articles by Vadim A. Shcherbakov [13, pp. 252–273], Natalia B. Kirillova [11, pp. 77–93], Yuliya E. Galanina and Oleg M. Feldman [14, pp. 364–383], as well as the study by C. Moody [15, pp. 859–869], among others.

[3] The plays of Arthur Schnitzler, a prominent representative of the so-called "drama of mood" (*Stimmungsdrama*), enjoyed great success in early 20th-century Russia. It is hardly surprising that his *The Veil of Pierrette* attracted the attention of such stage masters as Meyerhold and Tairov. For a more detailed discussion of Schnitzler's "drama of mood" on the Russian stage, see [16, pp. 1–13]. Furthermore, Schnitzler's works frequently served as the basis for librettos in Russian operas of the period (see [17, pp. 115–133; 18, pp. 50–67]).

by Alexander Tairov at the Free Theater in 1913.[4] *Fiametta's Four Dead Men* is far less known, yet the production emerged as a direct result of the influence of *Columbine's Scarf*. As Shcherbakov writes:

> The triumph of Meyerhold's cabaret pantomime could not go unnoticed at the *Crooked Mirror*. Kholmskaya [the theater's founder. — *N. E.*], Kugel, and Evreinov all wanted to have their own silent hit [10, p. 82].

It appears, however, that Meyerhold's production served as an occasion rather than the underlying cause for the turn toward pantomime. In his articles from the late 1900s and early 1910s, Kugel demonstrated a sustained interest in the problems of "literariness" (*literaturchina*) and "theatricality" (*teatralnost*), as well as in pantomime as a theatrical genre. Analyzing the productions of the 1909/1910 season, he concluded:

> The more I think, the more I am convinced that the renewal of the theater must proceed by curbing the word [...] The tempo and rhythm of life have accelerated to such an extent... that the spoken word on stage seems slow, clumsy, and old-fashioned. Give us the lightning of instantaneous experiences, and music, music, and dances, dances!..[5]

It is symptomatic that, in Kugel's view, the paths toward the renewal of theatrical art lay not only in the realm of movement (*plastika*) but also in the realm of music.

In his *Theatrical Notes* (1910), the critic moves from the concept of dance toward that of pantomime. The catalyst for these reflections was the three-act production of Max Reinhardt's theater, *Sumurun*, based on a tale from *The One Thousand and One Nights*.[6] "Heroes, heroines, raisonneurs, *ingénues*, and noble fathers, accustomed to 'searing the hearts of people with the Word,' moved, mimed, and gestured to music all evening," wrote Kugel with admiration, though he had not yet seen the production himself. Nevertheless, he was *a priori* certain that it contained "moments of high artistic interest."[7] While highly valuing the concept of pantomime itself, the critic—as a true "miniaturist"—questioned the optimality of a full-scale production: "...I do not think,

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[4] For a comparison of Meyerhold's and Tairov's differing interpretations of Schnitzler's play, see [13, pp. 252–273].

[5] Homo Novus (Kugel, A. R.). (1909). *Po teatram* [Around the theaters]. *Teatr i Iskusstvo* [Theater and Art], (41), 706.

[6] Kugel, A. R. (1910). *Teatralnye zametki* [Theatrical notes]. *Teatr i Iskusstvo* [Theater and Art], (34), 634.

[7] Kugel, 1910.

however, that it was consistently entertaining; a three-act pantomime for an entire performance is too much."[8]

Approaching the problem of renewing theatrical language, Kugel identified the "root of all evil" in the strict division of theater into specific genres ("If thou art an actor, then declaim; if a singer, then sing; and if a ballet dancer, then dance"[9]). He proposed the celebrated *Gesamtkunstwerk*—a synthesis of arts within a cabaret framework—as the panacea for this fragmentation.[10] The broad integration of musical, choreographic, and mimetic elements appeared promising to him, as did the maximum limitation or complete absence of the spoken word: "...words today have become very cheap. [...] Word has settled into its own routine; it has withered and petrified."[11] While theater certainly needs poetry, Kugel concluded, this poetry is not embodied in speech. He wrote:

> [It is necessary] to find forms and means of expression for the romantic, fantastic, and mystical elements of theater in which abstract concepts and operations on logical data would be entirely absent—where thought would not be distracted by reasoning, moralizing, or syllogisms. Music? Yes, certainly. But music is not active (deystvenna). Theater, however, is found in action. Consequently, it must be pantomime. In pantomime, the narrative is active, while music provides the atmosphere and lyrical coloring. Let us try![12]

Kugel's call was somewhat belated. By the time the article was published (August 22, 1910), the first experiment in the pantomime genre had already taken place on the *Crooked Mirror* stage. According to the chronicle of Maria Yarotskaya,[13] the mimodrama *Pierrot in Love* premiered on either January 17 or 18, 1909. It was staged with music by Worms (which exact piece could not be determined) and, according to the chronicler, "despite the elegance of the dances and the good music... it did not stay in the repertoire."[14]

[8] Kugel, 1910.
[9] Kugel, 1910.
[10] The synthetic type of actor, who is equally proficient in various historical styles and diverse "genre-specific" skills, was described in detail by Liudmila Tikhvinskaya in her monograph (see [19, p. 135]).
[11] Kugel, 1910, p. 635.
[12] Kugel, 1910, p. 635.
[13] Yarotskaya, M. K. (1908–1918). *Letopis teatra "Krivoe zerkalo"* [Chronicle of the *Crooked Mirror* theater] (Fund 2352, Inventory 1, File 62). Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), Moscow, Russia.
[14] Yarotskaya, 1908–1918, p. 21.

In August 1910, while traveling through Europe, Kugel and Zinaida V. Kholmskaya passed through Munich and attended a performance of Reinhardt's *Sumurun*, an experience that prompted the critic to further reflection. In his *Theatrical Notes*, he essentially formulated certain tenets of his "theory of pantomime" and perhaps even constructed a prototype for the future pantomimic miniatures of the *Crooked Mirror*. His starting point remained the potential rejection of the literary word. At the same time, the critic became convinced that his assumptions regarding the scale of this new pantomime were correct: it should be neither multi-act nor lengthy.

> Reinhardt, apparently, has not yet grasped the main point: that the pantomime of the dramatic theater is, in its future, inextricably linked with the general movement of the theater—its fragmentation and its "miniaturization." The very language of pantomime became necessary because it is a telegraphic, stenographic language, rather than the language of the long-winded epistle through which the theater corresponds with the public via the masters of literary affairs…[15]

Kugel prioritizes the language of the body and mimetic movements. In describing it, he resorts to musical terminology, thereby bringing music and movement (*plastika*) closer together; in his view, these elements express the poetry of emotion on stage far more accurately and vividly than any literary text. The critic was deeply impressed by the actress Camilla Eibenschütz, who played the role of Sumurun:

> There she is [Sumurun.—*N. E.*], throwing her arms over Nur al-Din's shoulders and crossing them just above the wrists. What eloquence of the hands! […] And looking at this music of the hands, at this scale of some unheard tones, […] I said to myself: this would not have happened if she were speaking; she could not have produced so many measures of *amoroso* and *andante* in the fading play of her hands if she were speaking. Then, it would have been inartistic. The music of speech is despotic and demanding. It would have cut short this part of the symphony.[16]

Ultimately, Kugel "equates" music and pantomime, as in the latter "…emotions are depicted ideally, as in music."[17]

It is significant that this new pantomime was intended specifically for dramatic actors, for classical dance does not yield the same results as the plasticity of gestures. After all, the aforementioned Eibenschütz "…does not dance at all;

[15] Kugel, 1910, p. 650.
[16] Kugel, 1910, p. 651.
[17] Kugel, 1910, p. 651.

perhaps she does not even know how to dance properly. …yet it was she, a dramatic actress—and not a ballet dancer or a professional dancer—who was able to convey without words what she conveyed…"[18]

Kugel's theoretical reflections soon found application in the creative practice of the *Crooked Mirror*. *Pierrot in Love* initiated a series of experiments in "pantomimic" miniatures, both with and without words. In her article, Maria Yarotskaya asserted that the "theater approached pantomime gradually."[19] From her perspective, actual pantomime was preceded by miniatures performed using the silhouette technique, in which actors dressed in black moved against the backdrop of an illuminated screen. "…The technique of our *Blanc et Noir* [numbers] was quite simple," Zinaida Kholmskaya recalled. "A white backdrop was set up, a thin mesh was stretched across, and in the middle, performers dressed entirely in black moved through pastorals, duets, or choreographic miniatures, creating a beautiful and original impression of living silhouettes. Although the audience was accustomed to looking for something inevitably funny, satirical, or parodical at the *Crooked Mirror*, they watched our experiments in the realm of the serious with equal interest" [20, p. 131]. In *Polka in the Style of Béranger* (1910), the screen depicted a modest room where a seamstress sat at her work. With the appearance of an artist, she "becomes distracted from her labor and, gradually growing more cheerful, dances a polka."[20]

The second silhouette production, staged during the same season to the music of Benjamin Godard, was an elegant stylization:

> The screen represented a lace fan, upon which appeared two black figures—a marquis and a ballerina. The marquis sang of how, while attending the ballet near the King, he fell in love with a shepherdess and her lamb. Accompanied by the marquis's romance, the actress had to depict herself tending a lamb with a small bell around its neck.[21] (*Illustration 1*)

Despite the inclusion of the spoken word, Yarotskaya considers this number to be pantomimic; furthermore, it enjoyed significant public success and remained

[18] Kugel, 1910, p. 651.
[19] Yarotskaya, M. K. (n.d.). *Pantomimy, postavlennye v dorevolyutsionnyi period teatra "Krivoe zerkalo"* [Pantomimes staged during the pre-revolutionary period of the *Crooked Mirror* Theater] (Fund 396). A. A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum (GCTM), Manuscript Department, Moscow, Russia.
[20] Yarotskaya, n.d., p. 1.
[21] Yarotskaya, n.d., p. 1.

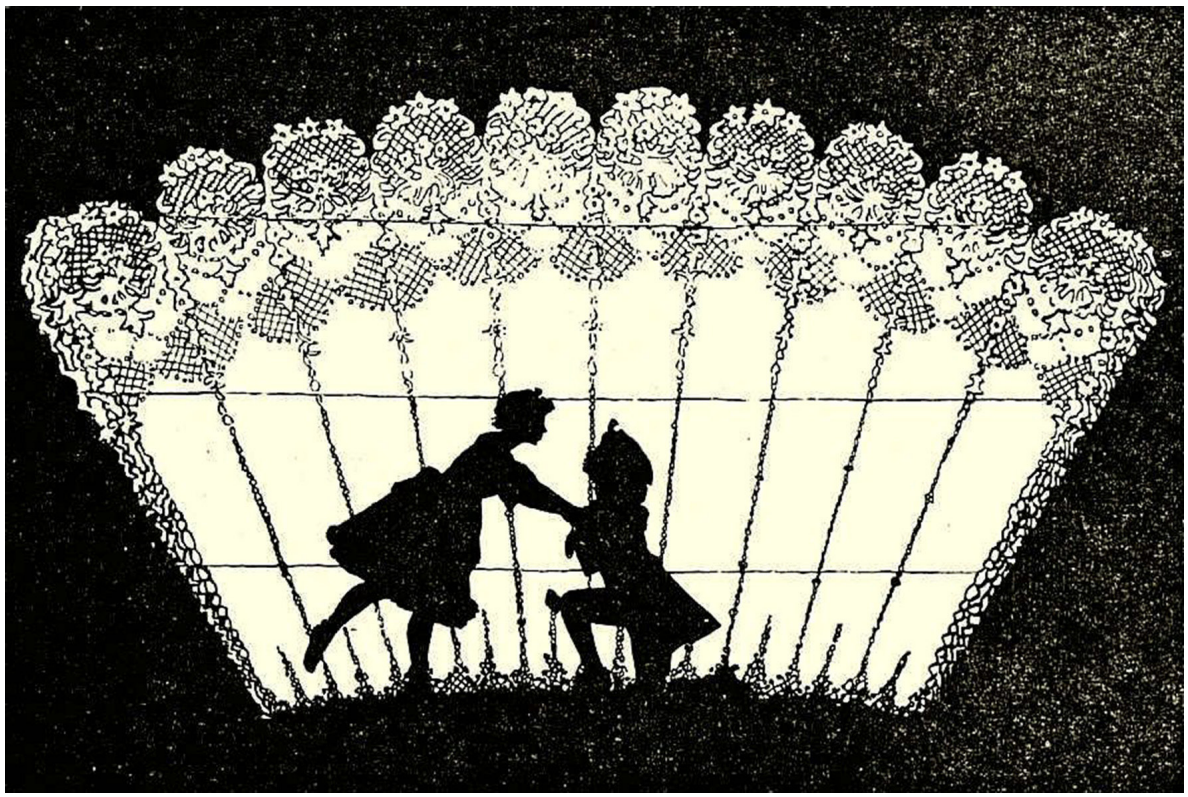


Illustration 1. Near the Ballet in the Old Days.
Ballerina—Maria Yarotskaya, Marquis—Armen Abramyan.
Source: *Teatr i Iskusstvo* [*Theater and Art*], 1910, no. 51, p. 1000

in the repertoire from 1910 to 1912. Critics also appreciated this elegant "trifle" (*pustyachok*):

> The ballet transports us to the era of the "Sun King", wrote a reviewer for the journal *Teatr i Iskusstvo*. The Marquis sings before the ballerina, professing his love. The ballerina responds gracefully in the language of ballet. Godard's music is superb, and this entire charming 18th-century scene, with its inherent poetry, presents a beautiful vision—a certain synthesis of arts (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) combining music, singing, dance, and painting. The success is bolstered by the performance of Ms. Yarotskaya (as the ballerina) and the beautiful singing of Ms. [Astra (Azra)] Abramyan (as the marquis).[22]

[22] A. B. (1910). Krivoe zerkalo [The Crooked Mirror]. *Teatr i Iskusstvo* [Theater and Art], (51), 988.

While focusing on "silhouettes" as the immediate predecessors of pantomime, Yarotskaya does not mention *Lanner's Waltz*, which appeared in the program on February 3, 1909. Performed by "Mr. Ikar [Nikolai Barabanov] and Ms. [Elizaveta] Nelidova," it was specifically identified as a pantomime by an anonymous chronicler in *Obozrenie Teatrov* (*Theater Review*).[23]

On the Six Beauties Who Were Not Like One Another

On the path toward Fiametta's Dead Men, the *Crooked Mirror* undertook another experiment in combining the spoken word, sound, and movement (*plastika*). During his first season at the theater (1910), Evreinov staged an adaptation of the Arabian tale by Muhammad al-Bafi, *On the Six Beauties Who Were Not Like One Another*, featuring his own music, with sets and costumes designed by Mikhail Yakovlev.[24]

It is possible that the turn toward this source was partially "provoked" by Kugel's impressions of Reinhardt's *Sumurun*, as both plots share a spicy Oriental exoticism. However, in his memoirs, the director offers a different rationale. During his inaugural season at the *Crooked Mirror*, he wished to "...dazzle with a production whose success relied not only on the wit of the dialogue and action, but also on its pictorial-theatrical presentation..." [21, p. 140].

It should be noted that the play lacks any particular wit, and its plot is quite simple. Three pairs of concubines in a harem—The White (White Moon) and The Black (Coal in Fire), The Plump (Full Moon) and The Slender (Houri of Paradise), The Golden-Haired (Sun of Day) and The Dark-Haired (Apple of the Eye)—vie for the attention of a handsome youth, Ali al-Yamani. They compete in elegant, ornamentally Oriental speeches, singing, and dancing, so that the youth may choose

[23] Khronika [Chronicle]. (1909, February 4). *Obozrenie teatrov* [Theater Review], (653), 8.

[24] According to Olga Kraeva's commentaries on Kholmskaya's memoirs, "the tale is part of the *One Thousand and One Nights* cycle; in Russian translation, it is titled *The Tale of Six Slave Girls* [...] Evreinov used the sixteen-volume French edition: Mardrus J.-Ch. *Le livre des mille nuits et une nuit* / Ed. de la Revue blanche puis Fasquille, 1899–1903" [20, p. 130]. Music played a significant role in Evreinov's extensive and diverse body of work. During the pre-revolutionary period, he occasionally composed music for stage miniatures, including the parody opera *The Sweet Pie* and the musical comedy *The Runaway* (the musical scores are held at the A. A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum). For more details on Evreinov as a composer, see [22, pp. 38–49; 23, pp. 122–139].

the fairest among them. This plot contained an underlying divertissement quality, which the director deemed appropriate for non-aesthetic reasons, as he believed Zinaida Kholmskaya was devoted to the divertissement format.

The primary dramaturgical technique employed by Evreinov consisted of a deliberate distancing of the stage action from the spoken word. A narrator (The Storyteller) was introduced into the adaptation, recounting the tale with an appropriately Oriental deliberateness and addressing the audience directly; scenographically, he was isolated from the primary action (*Illustration 2*). As the Storyteller narrated, the characters illustrated his words: "All characters", Evreinov notes several times in the stage directions, "behave in accordance with the words of the narrator."[25]

Thus, the experiment involved the illustration of the spoken word through the means of theatrical action. Kugel regarded this technique as innovative, though, unfortunately, the critics failed to notice the innovation:

> Here, N. N. Evreinov has staged Scheherazade's *The Tale of the Six Beauties Who Were Not Like One Another*, Kugel wrote in his *Notes*, where a reciter, in the guise of an Arabian storyteller, reads the narrative while the tale is acted out behind him. [...] Yet I have not read a single word anywhere suggesting that Mr. Evreinov's experiment is original—as if all theaters have been doing this for ages, and it is all as old as the invention of printing and Chinese ink.[26]

The Tale of the Six Beauties cannot, of course, be unconditionally classified as a pantomime. However, within this unique cabaret synthesis, movement played a significant role, while the spoken word, conversely, was somewhat weakened and partially removed from the framework of the stage action. Judging by the libretto of the adaptation, held in the Dramatic Censorship Fund of the St. Petersburg State Theatre Library, one must admit that the mimetic portion of the performance was developed in considerable detail, albeit somewhat naively, in my view.[27]

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[25] Evreinov, N. N. (n.d.). *O shesti krasavitsakh, ne pokhozhikh drug na druga* [On the six beauties who were not like one another]. Adaptation of the tale by Muhammad al-Basri. St. Petersburg State Theatre Library (SPbGTB), Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts (ORiRK), St. Petersburg, Russia. Typescript.

[26] Homo Novus [Kugel, A. R.]. (1910). Zametki [Notes]. *Teatr i Iskusstvo* [Theater and Art], (42), 786.

[27] However, it is possible that such "naivety" was a deliberate artistic objective of the director, who sought to stylize conventionalized Oriental movement (*plastika*).



Illustration 2. The Tale of the Six Beauties Who Were Not Like One Another.
The Storyteller (bottom right corner)—Lev Fenin.
Source: *Teatr i Iskusstvo [Theater and Art]*, 1910, no. 41, p. 761

For instance, this is how Black Coal performs her divertissement number:

> The Black One [addressing her rival, the White Moon—N.E.] (*folds her hands and brings them to her face*): Do you know, O ignorant one, the passage in the Quran where Allah swears by the darkness of the night and the light of the day?.. Well then (*stepping forward and stretching her hands out*), in this oath, He mentioned the night first, and only then the day. Allah would not have done so (*pulling her hand to her shoulder*) if the primacy of the day had been dearer to Him. And when (*hands forward*) do friends gather, if not at night? And to whom (*both hands by her face, leaning forward*) do lovers owe the concealment of their caresses, if not to the gracious night![28]

The "monologue" of the Fat One is developed in even greater detail:

> The Fat One: Glory be to Allah (*placing her hands behind her head, voluptuously*), who stuffed my skin with fat that smells of dewy incense near and far,

[28] Evreinov, n.d., p. 6.

> and who did not deny me (*lowering her right hand with tension*) a sufficient amount of muscle, so that if necessary, I could deliver such a blow (*gestures*) that would instantly (*lowering her hands expressively*) turn an enemy into quince marmalade. (*Everyone laughs. The Fat One extends her hand*). Do not laugh. The sages said that the joy of life consists of three things (*counting on her fingers*): eating meat, embracing meat, and merging with meat. Allah Himself (*raising her hands*) approves of fat in His Book when He commands the sacrifice (*lowering her hands*) of fat rams, fat lambs, and (*hands on hips*) fat calves. (*Crossing her arms, head held high, defiantly*) Has anyone ever heard of a customer asking a butcher for lean meat?[29]

Judging by the press reviews, this elaborately developed mimetic language also failed to attract significant attention. Critics mentioned the performer of the narrator's role ("...the figure of the storyteller Fenin is magnificent"[30]), the scenography ("...the original costumes are well-conceived and colorful,"[31] "...the sets are good"[32]), and briefly touched upon the acting, which was described as "not bad." They also noted "Ms. Batorskaya, who performed the role of the White Beauty excellently, and Ms. Abramyan, who sweetly sang a romance."[33] A reviewer for *Peterburgskii Listok* [*St. Petersburg Leaflet*] highlighted the beautiful staging. However, there was not a single word about Evreinov's music. It can be assumed that it failed to garner attention due to its functional (applied) nature or perhaps its mediocre quality. Nevertheless, verifying such an assumption is currently impossible: the piano score (or full score), if they ever existed, has not yet been located.

The question of the contemporary critical reception of the staged adaptation also remains open. *Peterburgskii Listok* briefly states that the poetic *Tale of the Six Beauties* was a success.[34] The reviewer for *Teatr i Sport* [Theater and Sports], writing under the pseudonym Stary Vorobey [Old Sparrow], does not provide such details; however, in his opinion, despite the colorful scenography and decent acting, the play lacks a high artistic level and integrity:

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[29] Evreinov, n.d., p. 7.

[30] Stary Vorobey. (1910). *Teatr i Sport* (October 3), as cited in Yarotskaya, 2003, p. 90.

[31] Stary Vorobey. (1910). *Teatr i Sport* (October 3), as cited in Yarotskaya, 2003, p. 90.

[32] *Peterburgskii Listok* [St. Petersburg Leaflet], 1910 (270, October 2), as cited in Yarotskaya, n.d., p. 91.

[33] As cited in Yarotskaya, n.d., p. 91.

[34] As cited in Yarotskaya, n.d., p. 91.

> ...For such a *tableau vivant* to be captivating,—he writes,—it is required that every element of art—dance, singing, recitation, and finally, 'beauty' itself—be equal to the overall task. From an external perspective, there is no illusion of Oriental beauty, where everything is built upon the Oriental languor and plasticity of the heavenly houris competing before their lord.[35]

Conclusion

The Tale of the Six Beauties had a relatively short stage life and was not fully appreciated by either critics or, presumably, the public. However, for the theater itself, it represented a significant step toward dramatic pantomime. The weakening of the literary word and its displacement beyond the boundaries of the theatrical action, the detailed elaboration of the plastic plot, and the fact that the performance was intended specifically for dramatic actors—all the core points of Kugel's theoretical program were realized in this production. All that remained was to completely abandon the spoken word and introduce a "mask-based plot" (*maskochnyi syuzhet*) to fully meet the demands of the time. Such a pantomime appeared in the repertoire of the *Crooked Mirror* in 1911—a "silent blockbuster," as Shcherbakov put it—titled *The Four Dead Men of Fiammetta*.

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The article was submitted 20.01.2026; approved after reviewing 19.02.2026; accepted for publication 10.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 20.01.2026; одобрена после рецензирования 19.02.2026; принята к публикации 10.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

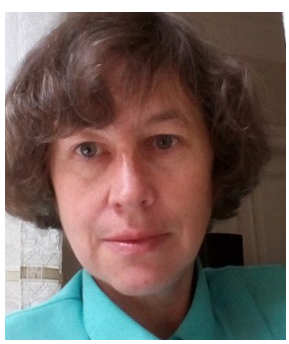
eISSN 2587-9731

Schostakovich in Memoriam

Original article
UDC 78.03
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-075-105
EDN ONSQZV

Shostakovich and Berg: Parallels and intersections

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to the memory of one of the leading Russian researchers of Dmitri Shostakovich's work, Tamara Nikolaevna Levaya. Turning to the genre of the "double portrait," widely represented in her works, the author attempts to identify parallels and intersections in the creative destinies of two classics of the twentieth century — Dmitri Shostakovich and Alban Berg. First of all, biographical facts related to the Leningrad premiere of *Wozzeck*, which Shostakovich attended, are traced and clarified, and its influence is determined

Translated by Irina G. Latysheva

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not only on Shostakovich's operatic style, but also on the reception of both his operas. In addition, Berg's interested attitude to Shostakovich's First Symphony is documented. The most indicative ones are selected from a number of artistic and typological parallels: the phenomenon of processuality, which determined the involvement of both composers in energetics as an archetype of musical thinking in the 1920s, and a passion for Aesopian language and a hidden program, which finds expression in the use of musical monograms (their formation is traced on the basis of the signature).The chosen perspective allows us to clearly see not only similar aspects of creativity, but also to identify fundamental differences. Based on linear patterns, the development of thematic material in Berg maintains a connection with the principles of Schoenberg's "musical prose." His secret program is of a purely private nature, and the monograms do not have intonational specificity and are not designed for recognition. Shostakovich's "thematically concentrated development" is associated with neo-baroque linearity. His Aesopian language was perceived by listeners as a "coded message to his contemporaries," and the DSCH monogram became the intonational emblem of Shostakovich's music.

Keywords: Dmitri Shostakovich, Alban Berg, processuality, *Fortspinnung*, Aesopian language, monograms

For citation: Veksler, Yu. S. (2026). Shostakovich and Berg: Parallels and intersections. *Contemporary Musicology*, *10*(1), 75–105.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-075-105

Памяти Д. Д. Шостаковича

Научная статья

Шостакович и Берг: параллели и пересечения

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена памяти одного из ведущих отечественных исследователей творчества Шостаковича Тамары Николаевны Левой. Обращаясь к жанру «двойного портрета», широко представленному в ее трудах, автор предпринимает попытку выявить параллели и пересечения в творческих судьбах двух классиков XX века — Дмитрия Шостаковича и Альбана Берга. В первую очередь прослеживаются и уточняются биографические факты, связанные с ленинградской премьерой «Воццека», на которой побывал Шостакович, а также определяется ее влияние не только на оперный стиль Шостаковича, но и на рецепцию обеих его опер. Кроме того, документируется заинтересованное отношение Берга к Первой симфонии Шостаковича. Из ряда художественно-типологических параллелей избираются наиболее показательные: феномен процессуальности,

определивший причастность того и другого композитора к энергетизму как архетипу музыкального мышления 1920-х годов, и пристрастие к эзопову языку и скрытой программе, что находит свое выражение в использовании музыкальных монограмм (прослеживается их формирование на основе подписи). Избранный ракурс позволяет отчетливо увидеть не только сходные аспекты творчества, но и выявить принципиальные различия. Основанное на линеарных закономерностях развертывание тематизма у Берга сохраняет связь с принципами шенберговской «музыкальной прозы». Его тайная программа носит сугубо приватный характер, а монограммы не обладают интонационной специфичностью и не рассчитаны на узнавание. «Тематически концентрированное развертывание» у Шостаковича связано с необарочной линеарностью. Его эзопов язык воспринимался слушателями как «зашифрованное послание современникам», а монограмма DSCH стала интонационной эмблемой музыки Шостаковича.

Ключевые слова: Дмитрий Дмитриевич Шостакович, Альбан Берг, процессуальность, развертывание, эзопов язык, монограммы

Для цитирования: *Векслер Ю. С.* Шостакович и Берг: параллели и пересечения // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 75–105. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-075-105

Introduction

On January 15, 2025, Tamara Nikolaevna Levaya, Professor at the Nizhny Novgorod Conservatory and one of the leading scholars on Dmitri Shostakovich's works,[1] passed away. The choice of this article's topic, as well as its formulation, is a tribute to a cherished teacher and colleague.

Among Tamara Levaya's preferred musicological subjects was the concept of the "double portrait,"[2] which was also the theme of her final presentation, titled *Schnittke and Shostakovich*.[3] At first glance, creating such a double portrait of Shostakovich and Berg (*Illustrations 1* and *2*) might seem unlikely: these two composers, undisputed giants of 20th-century music, have much that sets them apart. They are separated by time and space, their approaches to avant-garde music and socially relevant art diverge, and their differences also stem from the fundamentally different positions they held as composers in the Soviet Union and in the West. While Shostakovich, despite the dramatic nature of his life, was officially recognized as the "number one" figure in the Soviet Union, almost mythologized, neither Berg nor any of his contemporaries could have achieved a similar status in their homeland. The legacies of Shostakovich and Berg are hardly comparable in quantitative terms: Shostakovich's creative journey spanned more than half a century, his productivity was exceptional, and his body of work vast. In contrast, Berg lived only 50 years, leaving behind around 15 compositions.

[1] The studies on Shostakovich by Levaya were included in the collection [1]. She continued to work on this topic in the following years.

[2] See, in particular, several materials in the book *Dvadtsatyi vek v zerkale russkoi muzyki* [*The Twentieth Century in the Mirror of Russian Music*]: "Rakhmaninov i Prokof'ev. Neperesekayushchiesya miry?" ["Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev. Non-Intersecting Worlds?"] [2, pp. 255–265]; "Shostakovich i Bakhtin. Poetika soprotivleniya" ["Shostakovich and Bakhtin. The Poetics of Resistance"] [2, pp. 296–309]; "Shostakovich i Prokof'ev. Eskiz dvoinogo portreta" ["Shostakovich and Prokofiev. A Sketch of a Double Portrait"] [2, pp. 310–319]; "Sil'vestrov i Motsart. Motiv vestnichestva" ["Silvestrov and Mozart. The Motif of Heralding"] [2, pp. 367–374].

[3] This report was presented twice: at the scientific conference *Akademicheskaya muzyka v XX veke: mezhdu etikoi i estetikoi* [*Academic Music in the 20th Century: Between Ethics and Aesthetics*] as part of the Nizhny Novgorod Opera and Ballet Theater's arts festival *Sovremennaya muzyka: Shostakovich, Meierkhol'd, Shnitke* [*Contemporary Music: Shostakovich, Meyerhold, Schnittke*] (Nizhny Novgorod, Arsenal, August 29, 2024), and as an open lecture at the All-Russian Youth Scientific and Cultural Forum *Glinka—navsegda!* [*Glinka—Forever!*] (Nizhny Novgorod Conservatory, November 18, 2024).



Illustration 1. Dmitri Shostakovich.
Source: https://sun9-43.userapi.com/eiubRTqQrblc-g0k62c9e_MECnIojShoi81wAw/9iyOERmmttI.jpg

Nonetheless, there were both intersections and parallels in the creative destinies of Shostakovich and Berg. The focal point is the Leningrad premiere of *Wozzeck* on June 13, 1927,[4] where the composers met in person. This event marked the beginning of the worldwide success of Berg's opera, while providing the young Shostakovich with the impetus to search for a modern operatic style. Just weeks after the premiere, work began on his opera *The Nose*.

[4] The opera was performed at the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre. The production was directed by Sergei E. Radlov; the conductor was Vladimir A. Dranishnikov; the title role was performed by Mikhail V. Bocharov. The first study devoted to this topic belongs to Inna A. Barsova: see Barsova, I. A. (1998). 'Nowhere Was My *Wozzeck* Received Better than in Leningrad'. *Music Academy*, (3–4, bk. 1), 141–144.



Illustration 2. Alban Berg at his desk (1930). Deutscher Photo-Dienst, MAN, 1930 (Ender, D. (2023). *Alban Berg im Bild. Fotografien und Darstellungen 1887–1935*. Böhlau Verlag, p. 166)

The Leningrad Premiere of Wozzeck and Its Reverberations

Prior to the Leningrad premiere of *Wozzeck*, Shostakovich was unfamiliar with Berg's music, as it had not been performed in Soviet Russia. Berg's name was also absent from the programs of the chamber concerts of the Association for Contemporary Music (ACM), where works by Schoenberg, Bartók, Hindemith, and Krenek[5] were performed. As Shostakovich later wrote in his *Questionnaire on the Psychology of the Creative Process*, it was precisely these composers whose works became the object of his close study beginning in the autumn of 1926 and served as an impetus for the "liberation" of his musical consciousness. A year later, Berg joined this circle. In the questionnaire, he is listed among Shostakovich's favorite composers, and *Wozzeck* among his favorite works.[6]

[5] For more detail on the programs of contemporary music concerts, see the memoirs of Mikhail S. Druskin: Druskin, M. S. (1977). *Studies. Memoirs*. Sovetsky kompozitor, pp. 191–212.

[6] Bobykina, I. A. (Ed.). (2000). *Dmitrii Shostakovich v pis'makh i dokumentakh – Dmitri Shostakovich through His Letters and Documents*. M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture; Antikva, p. 475.

Berg's opera remained in the repertoire only briefly: over the course of two years it was performed just seven times.[7] Shostakovich did not miss a single performance.[8]

The day after the premiere, on June 14, a banquet was held in the spacious apartment of Yuri Shaporin, where members of the ACM honored the composer of *Wozzeck*. Shostakovich was among those present. In *Testimony*, as recorded by Solomon Volkov, we read: "I sat and said nothing, partly because I was young and mostly because my German wasn't very good."[9]

Shostakovich's excitement and restraint are also evident in his signature on the endpaper of the journal *Novaya muzyka* (*New Music*), which he presented to Berg (*Illustrations 3.1.* and *3.2.*). He managed to write his surname in German only on the second attempt; the first unsuccessful version—omitting the syllable "ta"—was crossed out. Although from a young age he had worked carefully on his signature (as will be discussed below), writing it in German was still unfamiliar to him at the time. It is worth noting that the German spelling of the composer's surname would later form the basis of his DSCH monogram.

Did Berg hear Shostakovich's music during this meeting? There are no documents confirming this. In one of his interviews, without mentioning any names, Berg remarked that he had the opportunity to become acquainted with the work of young composers and that it struck him by its "diversity of styles, creative personalities, and even genres" [3, p. 58]. It is possible that Shostakovich was among the young composers who performed for Berg: at a similar banquet held earlier, he had presented his own compositions to Sergei Prokofiev, who had come to Soviet Russia on tour for the first time.[10]

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[7] According to announcements in the journal *Rabochii i teatr* (*Worker and Theatre*), six performances followed the premiere (8 and 14 October; 19 November 1927; 3 January, 19 January, and 29 March 1928). However, in a letter from the Directorate of the Leningrad State Theatres to Universal Edition dated September 1928 (TsGALI [*Central State Archive of Literature and Art of the USSR*], F. 260, Inv. 1, Archival unit 731, l. 64), only five performances are indicated.

[8] This is how it appears in Testimony; see Volkov, S. (Ed.). (1979). *Testimony: The memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich* (A. W. Bouis, Trans.). Harper & Row, p. 43. It should be noted that a critical attitude toward this source prevails within the scholarly community, which makes it impossible to accept all of its claims at face value.

[9] Volkov, S. (Ed.). (1979). *Testimony: The memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich* (A. W. Bouis, Trans.). Harper & Row, p. 45.

[10] Prokofiev, S. S. (2002). *Diary 1907–1933* (Vol. 2). sprkfv, p. 521.

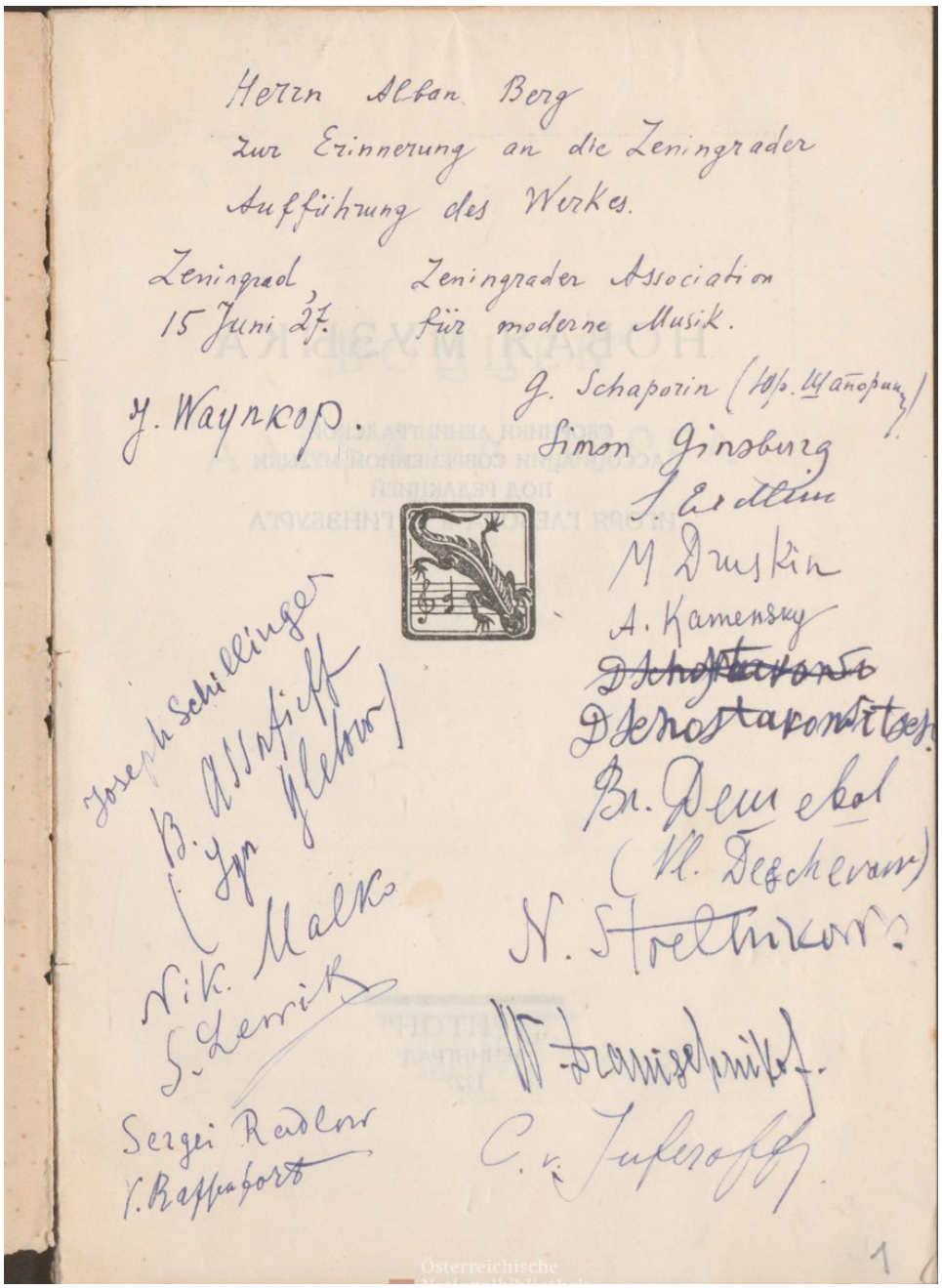


Illustration 3.1. Endpaper of the collection "New Music," Issue 4. 1927 with autographs of ASM members. ÖNB Musiksammlung. Fond 21 Berg 3158

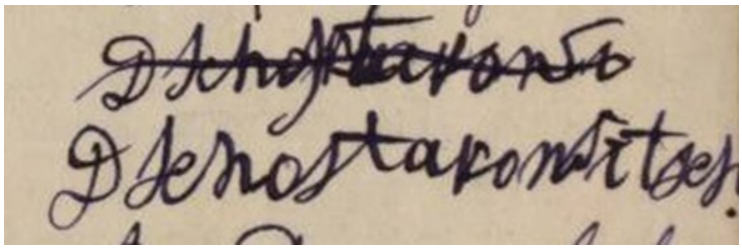


Illustration 3.2.
Shostakovich's autograph
on the Endpaper
of the collection "New Music,"
Issue 4. 1927 with autographs of ASM members.
ÖNB Musiksammlung. Fond 21 Berg 3158

After leaving Russia, Berg maintained correspondence for some time with Boris Asafiev, who did not miss the opportunity to remind him of the admiration he inspired among the younger generation. Thus, a year after the premiere, in June 1928, Asafiev wrote: "Mit Ihrem „Wozzeck" haben Sie unseren jungen besten Komponisten (Schostakowitsch, der eine gute Oper geschrieben hat—„Der Nase", nach Gogol,—und Popoff) eine neue Welt geöffnet..." [3, p. 74].[11]

Berg undoubtedly remembered Shostakovich's name, all the more so because in that same year, 1928, he witnessed the young composer's success in the West. On November 27, he attended the Viennese premiere of Shostakovich's First Symphony under the direction of Robert Heger.[12] An account of this event is found in a letter to Asafiev from Abram Isaakovich Dzimitrovsky, head of the Russian department of Universal Edition: "Prof. Heger wurde nach Symphonie sechsmal gerufen, was für Wien eine Seltenheit ist. [...] Er teilte mir mit, dass er die Symphonie so lieb gewonnen hat, dass er sie in seinen sämtlichen Gastspielen in sein Programm aufnehmen wird."[13] On the reverse side of Dzimitrovsky's letter, Berg added a note addressed both to Shostakovich and to Asafiev. Of the symphony, he particularly admired the first movement, which he described as "marvelous" ("famos"): "Das klingt wirklich sehr gut."[14]

[11] 27.06.1928. *ÖNB* [*Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*] MS F 21 Berg 513/2.

[12] Miller, L. (Ed.). (2016). *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva Shostakovicha* [*Chronicles of the Life and Work of Dmitri Shostakovich*]: *Vol. 1: 1903–1930*. DSCH, p. 358.

[13] Letter from A. Berg and A. Dzimitrovsky to B. V. Asafiev and D. D. Shostakovich, 29 November 1928. Cited in: Kryukov, A. N. (1981). Materialy k biografii B. Asaf'eva [Materials for a Biography of B. Asafiev]. Muzyka, p. 141 (note 13). Further in: Miller, L. (Ed.). (2016). *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva Shostakovicha* [*Chronicles of the Life and Work of Dmitri Shostakovich*]: *Vol. 1: 1903–1930*. DSCH, p. 359.

[14] Kryukov, A. N. (1981). *Materialy k biografii B. Asaf'eva* [*Materials for a Biography of B. Asafiev*]. Muzyka, p. 141.

As is well known, Berg was a master of writing benevolent and encouraging assessments, behind which his true attitude was not always immediately discernible. In this instance, however, he appears to demonstrate a genuine interest in Shostakovich's music. At that time, Berg himself had not abandoned the idea of composing a symphony and was examining other works in the genre. It is therefore no coincidence that he requested the score of the Symphony for review. In a letter of December 12 to Universal Edition in Vienna, its return is mentioned[15] —together with materials relating to *Scarlattiana* by Alfredo Casella[16]; the latter is referred to ironically as *Kalaffatiana* (Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati, a professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, was likely for Berg the embodiment of conservatism) (*Illustration 4*).

Berg's praise, as is well known, never reached Shostakovich. His relationship with Asafiev was complex—a separate subject that has been described more than once in musicological scholarship.[17] Nevertheless, Berg occupied a firm place in the young composer's spiritual world and retained it until the end of his life. This is confirmed, in particular, by the words of Maxim Shostakovich in a 1982 interview: "*Wozzeck* [sic!] was something my father always loved."[18]

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[15] According to the information available on the website of the *Alban Berg Stiftung* (Vienna), the scores of Shostakovich's works are not present in Berg's library. See Alban Berg Stiftung (n.d.). https://www.absw.at/bibliothekseintrag.php?content=database. For more detail on the composer's Viennese library and the process of its digitization, see our article [4].

[16] *Scarlattiana*, Op. 44, a divertimento on themes by Domenico Scarlatti for piano and small orchestra (1926).

[17] On the complex relationship between Shostakovich and Asafiev, see the essay by N. A. Braginskaya: Braginskaya, N. A. (2013). Asafiev. In L. Kovnatskaya (Ed.), *Shostakovich at the Leningrad Conservatory: Vol. 2: 1919–1930*. Kompozitor Publ. — St. Petersburg, pp. 75–82. It is noteworthy that the First Symphony became, in a sense, an "indicator" of their divergence soon after the establishment of friendly and trusting relations. Although Asafiev responded favorably to the young composer's work, he ignored its triumphant premiere on 12 May 1926; and "from a certain moment," as Braginskaya observes, "Asafiev in his eyes embodied that part of the Leningrad 'musical world' into whose 'murky waters,' in the composer's own words, he was forced to plunge" (Braginskaya, 2013, p. 77).

[18] Maksim Shostakovich on His Father: An Interview by Aleksandr Abramov (1982). *Vremya i my* [*Time and Us*], *69*, p. 175.

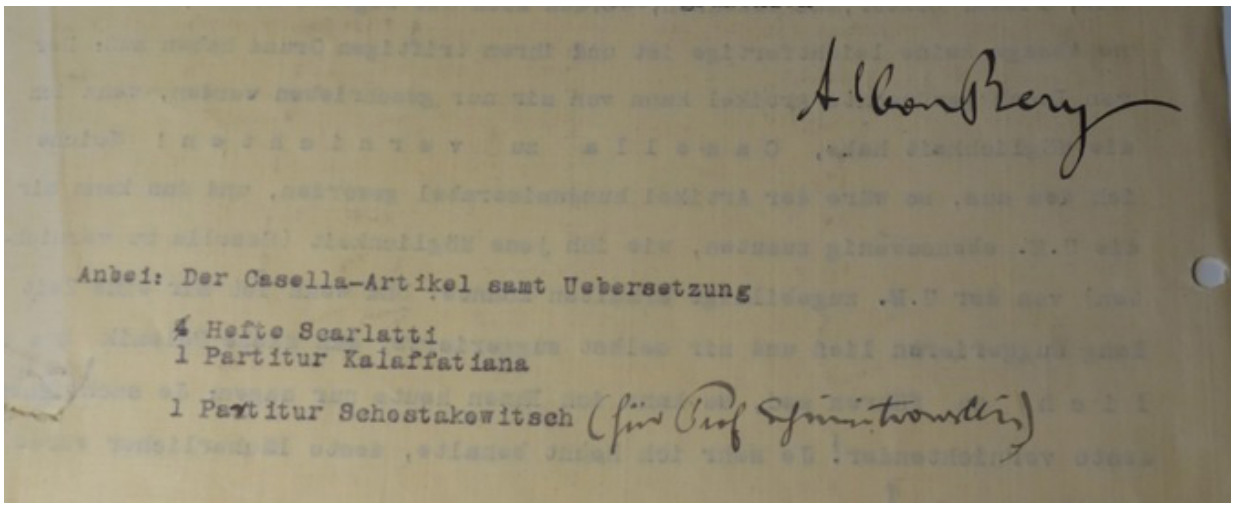


Illustration 4. Letter from A. Berg to O. Heinsheimer, 12.12.1928 (fragment[19]).
Source: Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Briefwechsel Alban Bergs
mit der Universal Edition. № 152

Wozzeck not only influenced Shostakovich's artistic consciousness; it effectively shaped the reception of his operatic works. Critics repeatedly drew comparisons between them. Decisive in this regard was the opinion of Shostakovich's close friend Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinsky. It was he who declared that "without *Wozzeck* there would have been neither *The Nose* nor *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*,"[20] in effect counting Berg among Shostakovich's spiritual forebears. By the mid-1930s, Shostakovich and Berg were already placed side by side in the pantheon of outstanding contemporary composers. In 1935, in an obituary for Berg published in the Viennese newspaper *Der Wiener Tag*, *Wozzeck* was mentioned in the same breath as *Elektra*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Jenůfa*, and *Lady Macbeth*.[21]

[19] "Enclosed: Casella's article with translation;
4 notebooks of Scarlatti;
1 score of *Kalaffatiana*;
1 score by Shostakovich (for Prof. Dzimitrovsky)."

[20] Mikheeva, L. V. (Ed.). (1978). *Pamyati I. I. Sollertinskogo: Vospominaniya, materialy, issledovaniya* [*In Memory of I. I. Sollertinsky: Recollections, Materials, Studies*] (2nd enlarged ed.). Sovetskii kompozitor [Soviet Composer] – Leningrad, p. 205.

[21] Miller, L., & Digonskaya, O. G. (Eds.). (2023). *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva Shostakovicha* [*Chronicles of the Life and Work of Dmitri Shostakovich*]: *Vol. 2: 1931–1935*. DSCH, p. 638.

Unfortunately, this discourse also provided ammunition for detractors. In the 1930s, the association between the names of Shostakovich and Berg proved fateful: when the campaign against *Lady Macbeth* unfolded, Shostakovich was repeatedly reproached for the supposedly "negative" influence of Berg's opera. Even well before the article *Muddle Instead of Music*,[22] one critic pointed to the pernicious impact of Western composers who had "determined the character of Shostakovich's musical technique…, imprinting upon it a stamp of self-purposefulness [samotsel'nost'], rootlessness, and worthlessness."[23]

The official criticism that followed in the aforementioned fateful article in the newspaper *Pravda* indirectly affected the fate of Berg's music in Russia as well. Although Berg's name was not mentioned in the article, it was undoubtedly implied in the references to the deformities of "petty-bourgeois 'innovation'" and to "jerky, shrill, neurasthenic music." The article made it impossible to pay full tribute to the Austrian composer, who had died in Vienna only a few weeks before its publication. A memorial concert scheduled in Moscow for 31 March under the direction of Hermann Scherchen was cancelled. The memorial concert in Leningrad, however, did take place. On 12 and 14 January, excerpts from the *Lulu-Symphonie* were performed at the Leningrad Philharmonic for the first time in the USSR, conducted by Fritz Stiedry (see [5, p. 307]). Shostakovich, in all likelihood, attended the concert and heard music from Berg's second opera. At any rate, he informed Sollertinsky of his intention to do so, adding: "The deceased was a genius. I am certain that he will be appreciated sooner or later."[24]

In the Wake of Energeticism

The perspective adopted in this article necessitates addressing not only historical-biographical and reception-related aspects, but also attempting to identify parallels between Berg and Shostakovich on the artistic-typological level. Leaving aside questions of operatic style and the specific features of quotation

[22] The editorial article *Muddle Instead of Music*, in which Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was subjected to criticism, was published in the newspaper *Pravda* on 28 January 1936.

[23] Thus in Alexander A. Ostretsov's article *On Shostakovich's Music*, published in the journal *Muzykal'naya samodeyatel'nost'* in October 1934, as cited in: Miller, L., & Digonskaya, O. G. (Eds.). (2023). *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva Shostakovicha* [*Chronicles of the Life and Work of Dmitri Shostakovich*]: *Vol. 2: 1931–1935*. DSCH, pp. 378–379.

[24] Letter of 9 January 1936, as cited in: Shostakovich, D. D. (2006). *Pis'ma I. I. Sollertinskomu* [*Letters to I. I. Sollertinsky*]. Kompozitor Publ. — St. Petersburg, p. 184.

and allusion, we shall focus on two aspects that, in our view, are particularly revealing: the phenomenon of processuality and the problem of Aesopian language.

Processuality plays a significant role in the work of both composers, determining their affiliation with energeticism as an archetype of musical thinking in the 1920s, a characteristic feature of which is the "energy–structural dualism" identified by Tatyana Vladimirovna Tsaregradskaya [6, p. 45]. The neo-Baroque and neoclassical tendencies that became established at that time revived an earlier, Bachian understanding of melody as the result of inner energetic forces. Ernst Kurth's celebrated study *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts* (1917), even contrary to the author's own intention, as Hermann Danuser writes, „einen modernen Kontrapunkt, der sich… im Grenzbereich zwischen Tonalität und Atonalität frei nach Maßgabe einer motorischen Bewegungsrhythmik entfaltete, gegen den Willen des Autors historisch zu legitimieren" [7, p. 151].

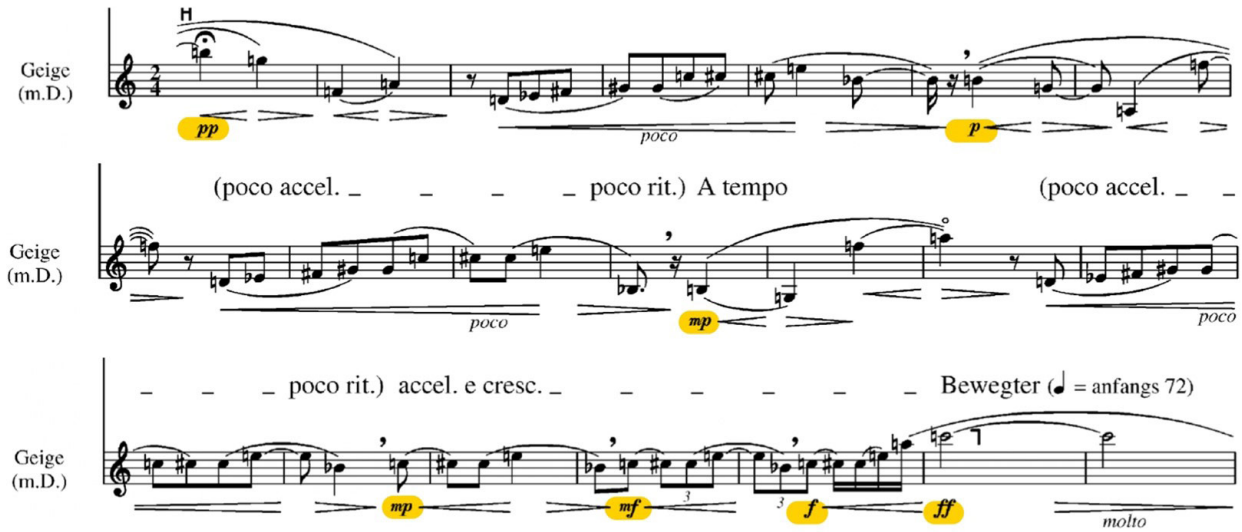
Yet in Berg and Shostakovich processuality is realized in different ways, since their compositional styles differ: atonal and twelve-tone in the mature Berg, and tonal in Shostakovich—despite modernist influences in his youth and certain points of contact with dodecaphony in his late works. Berg remains faithful to the principle of musical prose[25] that is fundamental to the Second Viennese School, whereas Shostakovich more readily reveals an affinity with neo-Baroque motoricism. In both composers, however, melodic development is not determined by harmonic attraction.

I have previously written on several occasions about the intersection of Berg's work with the ideas of energeticism. Although in Berg the energetic principles manifest themselves primarily at the stage of the compositional process (where an analogue to the Schenkerian Ursatz appears, possessing "not a linear-harmonic but rather a linear-dynamic nature" [8, pp. 83–84]), characteristic examples of Bergian melody are equally revealing.

The atonal *Adagio* of the *Chamber Concerto* offers an example of the *Fortspinnung* of a melodic line based on Schoenberg's principle of developing variation, as well as on combinatorial procedures characteristic of twelve-tone technique: two of its elements return in progressively more remote variants.

[25] By *musical prose*, composers of the Second Viennese School understood not only asymmetrical syntax, but also the highest possible concentration of expression, conceived as the supreme stage in the development of musical language and as a means of presenting musical thought with clarity and precision.

The large-scale crescendo from *pp* to *ff* encompasses numerous smaller waves, rises, and declines that shape the energetic profile of the work (here dynamics are not a secondary but, in essence, the principal dramaturgical factor) (*Example 1*).



Example 1. Alban Berg. Kammerkonzert für Klavier und Geige mit 13 Bläsern. *Adagio*, bars 241–261. Violin part, bars 241–261. UE 33148

Shostakovich's melody has been the subject of an enormous body of scholarship; it is one of the most thoroughly elaborated topics in Soviet musicology. For its description, Victor P. Bobrovsky's term "thematically concentrated *Fortspinnung*" became established: following the opening motive, there emerges an equally individualized continuation.[26] A classical example of such *Fortspinnung*—the *Andantino* from the *Fourth Quartet* (*Example 2*)—is discussed in the author's monograph on Shostakovich's chamber-instrumental works [9, pp. 27, 141–142]. The genesis of this type of *Fortspinnung* was traditionally traced both to Bachian polyphony and to Russian folk song. The latter explanation, as Choi Yong-Gil notes in his dissertation on problems in the study of Shostakovich's oeuvre, functioned in Soviet times as a kind of euphemism, since it made it possible, at least in this way,

[26] This principle was first formulated by Bobrovsky in 1961 in his monograph on Shostakovich's chamber instrumental ensembles [9, pp. 26–27].



Example 2. Dmitri Shostakovich. String Quartet No. 4. Second Movement, *Andantino*. First violin part. DSCH Publishers 2001, p. 4

to "legitimize" the unfamiliar features of the composer's melodic style.[27] It is telling that the term *Fortspinnung* itself belongs to Ernst Kurth, and that Lev A. Mazel—who first applied it in Russian scholarship—was also the author of the first Russian-language essay on the energetic theory of the Swiss musicologist (1939). The need for euphemisms has now disappeared, and Kurth's conceptual and terminological apparatus is widely employed by contemporary scholars of Shostakovich. Thus Levon O. Akopyan points to the "high degree of inner tension" in Shostakovich's themes, to their "extraordinarily high charge of potential energy, sufficient for the released kinetic energy to sustain a prolonged and eventful development without its artificial 'spurring' by means of 'insignificant harmonic progressions and modulations'" [10, p. 357].

Aesopian Language and Monograms

The second aspect that allows for parallels between Shostakovich and Berg concerns Aesopian language and the phenomenon of the hidden program. Studies of their music from this perspective, which emerged at the end of the twentieth century, contributed to an unprecedented revival of what had seemed to be a long-forgotten musical hermeneutics.

The idea of a hidden program in Berg's works was first discussed in connection with the annotated copy of the *Lyric Suite* for string quartet[28] discovered in 1977. This discovery brought about a veritable revolution in Berg scholarship and prompted a reassessment of the composer's entire oeuvre. It challenged the foundations of absolute and autonomous music as the principal achievement of modernism. It seemed that Berg felt ill at ease in modernity. The various kinds of symbolism he employed may be understood as a means of "inhabiting" the space of modernist art, which he perceived as inwardly alien.

Different motives underlie Shostakovich's Aesopian language. His poetics of allegory was bound up with the central theme of his oeuvre—"existence within the framework of a totalitarian state" (Tamara N. Levaya). "The history of relations

[27] Choi Yong-Gil (2004). *Cherty stilya D. D. Shostakovicha: Itogi i problemy izucheniya v sovetskom i rossiiskom muzykoznanii* [*Stylistic Features of D. D. Shostakovich: Results and Problems of Their Study in Soviet and Russian Musicology*] [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Russian Institute of Art History, p. 88.

[28] Perle, G. (1977). The Secret Programme of the Lyric Suite. *Musical Times*, (118), 629–632, 709–713, 809–813.

with authority, one might say, became absorbed into the very substance of the 'Shostakovich phenomenon,' becoming an inseparable part of it" [11, p. 4], notes Akopyan, while at the same time defending the possibility of another approach to the study of Shostakovich's work—a phenomenological one: this oeuvre should be seen first and foremost as one of the manifestations of absolute spirit.

Let us, however, attempt to build bridges between the Aesopian languages of Berg and Shostakovich. Among other things, they are united by a predilection for monograms.

In her article *Ot podpisi k monogramme* [*From Signature to Monogram*] [12], Olga G. Digonskaya traces the formation of the famous DSCH monogram. It begins with Shostakovich's elaboration of his own signature, followed by its translation into musical tones. Berg followed the same path. *Illustration 5* presents variants of the young Mitya's efforts to refine his signature; as Digonskaya aptly remarks, he "was truly obsessed with the idea of finding a precise and expressive graphic formula for his name" [12, p. 245]. Above them appears the well-known signature of the mature Shostakovich. *Illustration 6* shows analogous variants of Berg's signature: his monogram from the pages of his youthful musical diary and the plaque on the door of his apartment executed in the pretzel-like script he devised. Both composers attached particular importance to developing an individual, semantically dense, and aesthetically refined signature. Both, already in their youth, reflected on sound–letter correspondences.

In 1908 Berg signed one of his letters to his fiancée Helene Nahowsky[29] with the musical tones of his name, A–B (*Illustration 7*). Yet another fifteen years would pass before monograms entered his music. They appeared in two successive works—the *Chamber Concerto* (1923–1925) and the *Lyric Suite* (1925–1926)—as if representing two variants: public and secret. The former occurs in the motto prefacing the concerto, where not merely initials but the full names of Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern are encoded (*Illustration 8*). Limiting himself in the score to a brief hint ("Aller guten Dinge… [sind drei]" / "Good things come in threes"), Berg explained

[29] See Knaus, H., & Leibnitz, Th. (Eds.). (2012–2016). *Briefwechsel Alban Berg—Helene Berg: Gesamtausgabe*; a*us den Beständen der Musiksammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Vol. 1. 1907–1911*. Florian Noetzel Verlag, p. 81.

his intentions in the Open Letter to Schoenberg: the work was conceived as a tribute to his teacher and as a monument to the Second Viennese School.[30]

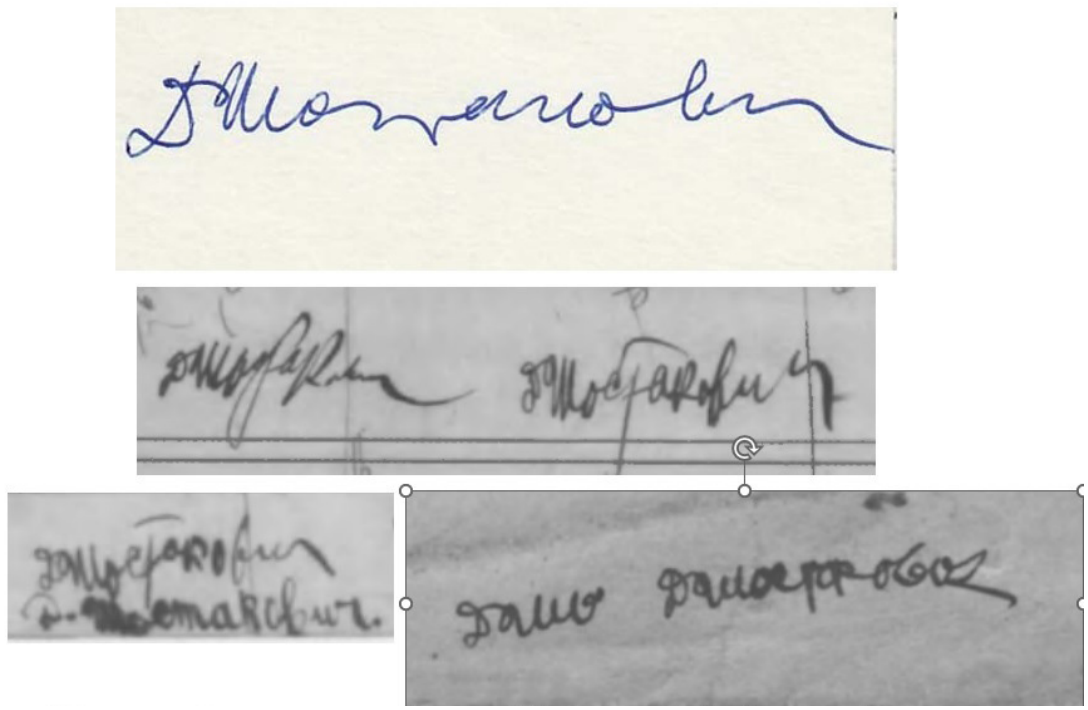


Illustration 5. Variants of Shostakovich's signature.
Source: https://www.memorabilia-uk.co.uk/p/dmitri-shostakovich;
[12, c. 245, 248]

The unofficial variant of the monogram is contained in the *Lyric Suite*. Here only initials are used—those of Berg himself (AB) and of his beloved Hanna Fuchs (HF). In creating a love story in six movements, the composer

[30] In the Open Letter Berg writes: "In einem musikalischen Motto, das dem ersten Satz vorangesetzt ist, sind die Buchstaben Deines, Anton Weberns und meines Namens, soweit dies in der Notenschrift möglich ist, in drei Themen (bezw. Motiven) festgehalten, denen eine bedeutende Rolle in der melodischen Entwicklung dieser Musik zugefallen ist." Alban Bergs Kammerkonzert für Geige und Klavier mit Begleitung von dreizehn Bläsern [Offener Brief an A. Schönberg] (1925). *Pult und Taktstock*, *Jg. 2*, p. 23.

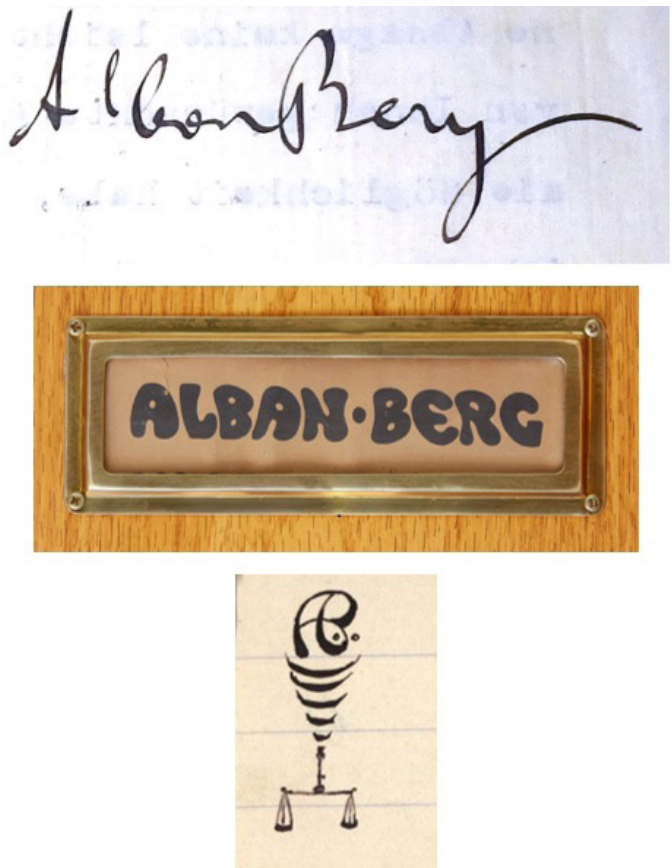


Illustration 6. Variants of Berg's Signature. Letter from A. Berg to O. Heinsheimer, 12.12.1928. Source: https://www.absw.at/stiftung-wohnung

incorporates the initials into the tone row, thereby demonstrating the truly boundless possibilities of Schoenberg's technique.[31] Through permutations of the row, the initials are combined into the four-note motive B–A–F–H, which—with reordering of pitches—appears repeatedly in the third movement (*Illustration 9*). It is noteworthy that neither in the *Chamber Concerto*, where Berg employs name-themes, nor in the *Lyric Suite*, where the motive derived from initials appears, does the composer particularly rely on memorability or recognizability. In the *Allegro misterioso*, moreover, the monogram-motive passes like an almost imperceptible rustle, rendered estranged through timbre, articulation, tempo, and dynamics.

The situation is different with Shostakovich. *Illustration 10* presents two of his monograms—the first and, probably, the last. The earliest attempt to establish sound–letter correspondences for his name was identified by Digonskaya in the composer's youthful manuscripts dating from 1920–1921 [12, pp. 252–259]. The presumably final

[31] In the annotated copy of the *Lyric Suite*, Berg refers to this, commenting on a sentence from the Preface: "…die scheinbar so gebundene „Komposition mit zwölf Tönen"… hat mir meine Hanna, auch noch andere Freiheiten gelassen! Z.Bsp. die, in dieser Musik immer wieder unsere Buchstaben H, F und A, B hineinzugeheimnissen" Annotated score of the *Lyric Suite*. In *ÖNB* MS F 21 Berg 3437, p. VI.

Und somit küss' ich Dir die mir teuren Hände innigst



Illustration 7. Letter from Berg to Helena Nakhovskaya, 1908 (undated)[32]

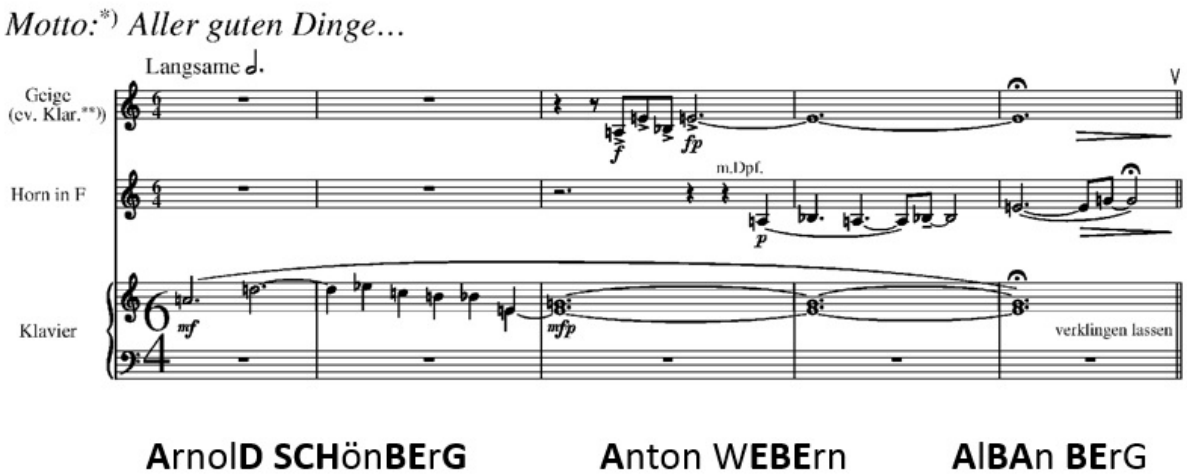


Illustration 8. Alban Berg. Chamber Concerto. First Movement. *Motto*. Score. UE 33148

appearance of the DSCH monogram occurs in a letter sent by Shostakovich a few months before his death to Derek Hulme, the author of the well-known catalogue of the composer's manuscripts.[33] The principal works in which the DSCH monogram appears were written during the period of the "Thaw," and the degree of its recognizability increased from opus to opus. In the Tenth Symphony (1953; *Illustration 11.1*) it was rather intuitively perceived by audiences

[32] "And so, I tenderly kiss your hands, which are so dear to me. [Alban Berg]." See Knaus, H., & Leibnitz, Th. (Eds.) (2012–2016). *Briefwechsel Alban Berg – Helene Berg: Gesamtausgabe; aus den Beständen der Musiksammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Vol. 1. 1907–1911*. Florian Noetzel Verlag, p. 81.

[33] Hulme, D. C. (2002). *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography* (3rd ed.) Scarecrow Press, p. 568.



Illustration 9. Alban Berg. *Lyric Suite*. Third Movement. *Allegro misterioso*, bars 1–2. Annotated exemplar for Hannah Fuchs. ÖNB MS F 21 Berg 3437, p. 26

who, in the words of Arkady I. Klimovitsky, were "psychologically oriented toward the poetics of Aesopian language" [13, p. 249]. In the Eighth Quartet, *In Memory of the Victims of Fascism and War* (1960; *Illustration 11.2*)—which the composer interpreted as a kind of auto-epitaph—Shostakovich himself pointed to it in a letter to Isaak Glikman.[34] Finally, in the *Preface to the Complete Edition of My Works* (1966; *Illustration 11.3*)[35]—for the benefit of the least perceptive—the composer's first and last name are demonstratively sung to the DSCH motive.

[34] "If I should ever die, it is unlikely that anyone will write a work dedicated to my memory. Therefore I have decided to write one myself. One could even inscribe on the title page: 'Dedicated to the memory of the author of this quartet.'" (Shostakovich's letter to Isaak Glikman, 19 July 1960, as cited in [11, p. 527]).

[35] *Preface to the Complete Edition of My Works and a Brief Reflection on This Preface*, for bass and piano, Op. 123, words by Pushkin and Shostakovich.

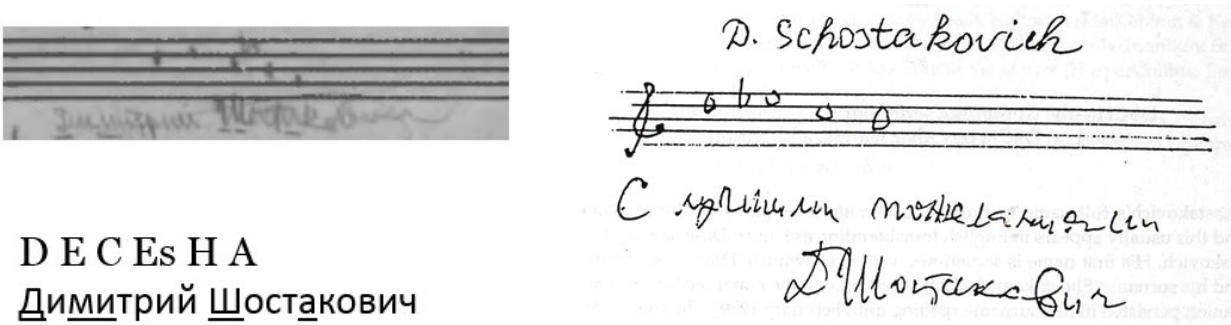


Illustration 10. Dmitry Shostakovich.
On the left is a monogram from a notebook
with educational tasks (1920–1921) [12, p. 256].
On the right is a monogram from a letter to Derek Hulme dated 12 July 1974[36]



Illustration 11.1. Examples of the DSCH monogram in Shostakovich's works:
Tenth Symphony, Third Movement, 7 bar to Reh. 105 (Hawkes Pocket Scores. 604)

[36] Hulme, D. C. (2002). *Dmitri Shostakovich: a catalogue, bibliography, and discography* (3rd ed.). Scarecrow Press, p. 568.



Illustration 11.2. Examples of the DSCH monogram in Shostakovich's works: *Eighth Quartet*, First Movement, bars 1–10[37]



Illustration 11.3. Examples of the DSCH monogram in Shostakovich's works: Preface to my complete works, bars 83–90[38]

As a kind of self-portrait, the auto-monogram generates an entire spectrum of meanings: from the affirmation, against all odds, of an unbending authorial will and of the composer's own Self, to self-irony, self-abasement, and self-estrangement. Unlike Berg's monogram, the DSCH motive functions as a thematic formula endowed with a specific intonational profile: its outer tones outline the tense interval of a diminished fourth, one of the emblematic intervals

[37] Shostakovich, D. D. (1979). Collected Works. Vol. 35. Quartets № 1–8. Muzyka, p. 237.
[38] Shostakovich, D. D. (1984). Collected Works. Vol. 33. Romances and songs for voice with piano. Muzyka, p. 66.

in Shostakovich's music. Yet the monogram may operate in another context as well: as later became clear, in the Tenth Symphony it forms part of a love narrative, much as in Berg's *Lyric Suite*. The name of the woman who at that time "occupied Shostakovich's heart and thoughts" [13, p. 267]—the Azerbaijani composer Elmira Nazirova (*Illustration 12*)—is likewise represented in the form of a monogram (*Illustration 13*).[39] Did Shostakovich know of Berg's monograms? Berg did not conceal them in the *Chamber Concerto*, but the secret program of the *Lyric Suite* became known only after Shostakovich's death.



Illustration 12. Elmira Nazirova.
Source:https://www.100philharmonia.spb.ru/persons/35844/

[39] See Kravets, N. (1996). Novyi vzglyad na Desyatuyu simfoniyu Shostakovicha [A new look at the Tenth Symphony of Shostakovich]. In L. G. Kovnatskaya (Ed.), *D. D. Shostakovich: A Collection of Articles on the 90th Anniversary of His Birth*. Kompozitor Publ. – St. Petersburg, pp. 228–248, for more. The author cites Shostakovich's letter to Nazirova of 29 August 1953, in which the composer informs his beloved that, "since he is constantly thinking of her, he has transformed her name into musical notes" (Kravets, 1996, p. 231).



Illustration 13. Tenth Symphony, Third Movement, Reh. 118,
Elmira Nazirova's monogram

Instead of a Conclusion

The present essay has not sought to produce a conventional "double portrait" of Shostakovich and Berg—an undertaking that would hardly be meaningful in view of the distance, and even the incompatibility, between their artistic worlds. Yet it was precisely this circumstance that prompted us to search for parallels and points of intersection between them. The composers' only personal meeting did not lead to further contact, which in any case would soon have become impossible under the conditions of the descending "Iron Curtain." Of immeasurably greater significance for Shostakovich was his encounter with Berg's music, which set a vector for his own explorations in opera—and not only in opera (there is evidently no need to speak of reciprocal influence, although Berg received Shostakovich's music with interest).

The impact of *Wozzeck* on both of Shostakovich's operas is indisputable; Shostakovich undoubtedly became acquainted with other works by his Austrian colleague as well, and many scholars have noted Bergian allusions and resonances even in his late opuses.

We have deliberately left this question beyond the scope of the present article, since it seems more important to trace not only aspects of "influence" as such, but also moments of affinity not conditioned by such influence and testifying instead to a typological community of artistic thinking. Within this framework, the differences between the two composers' artistic principles emerge with greater clarity. Thus, Shostakovich's and Berg's music is united by the phenomenon of processuality and, more broadly, by an energetic paradigm of musical thought characteristic of the neobaroque and neoclassicism of the 1920s. In both composers, this paradigm determines the principles governing their treatment of musical material. In Berg, who remains faithful to "musical prose," processuality manifests itself in Schoenberg's "developing variation"; in Shostakovich, in "thematically concentrated Fortspinnung." Fundamental differences also emerge in a trait characteristic of both composers—their predilection for Aesopian language and the hidden program. In Shostakovich, Aesopian language possesses a socio-political dimension, reflecting the impossibility of open utterance within the framework of state ideology. Berg's hidden program, by contrast, is exclusively personal and private in nature, enabling him to preserve a connection with the romantic tradition that had receded into the past. The treatment of monograms likewise diverges: in Shostakovich, DSCH functions as a symbolic theme endowed with distinctive intonational character and oriented toward recognition. Berg's monograms are akin to elements of twelve-tone technique, forming a deep structural layer of the musical text accessible only through analysis.

Naturally, the present article has by no means exhausted the parallels between Shostakovich and Berg. Many other elements of the two composers' Aesopian language—notably quotations and allusions, to which numerous studies have been devoted—remain beyond its scope. The theme of the reception of Shostakovich's and Berg's music in the twentieth century likewise allows the series of parallels to be extended. Despite the differences in the contexts of their reception, their music became a stumbling block for the broader public, perceived as excessively complex and incomprehensible, while at the same time serving as a target of criticism from the radical avant-garde as insufficiently progressive

or overly compromised. The elucidation of these and other points of attraction and repulsion will contribute not only to a better understanding of the work of these two protagonists, but also to a deeper comprehension of the musical landscape of the past century.

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The article was submitted 01.12.2025;
approved after reviewing 21.01.2026;
accepted for publication 04.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 01.12.2025;
одобрена после рецензирования 21.01.2026;
принята к публикации 04.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания /
Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Classics of the 20th Century

Original article
UDC 784
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-106-130
EDN OZRLVK

Dutch choral music of the twentieth century: A dialogue between experiment and tradition

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Abstract. This article examines the main trends of Dutch choral music in the 20th century. The Renaissance of Dutch Music (a term used by Herbert Antcliffe) at the end of the 19th century, associated with the active concert life of the country and the development of musical education, led to the emergence of original compositions, in which choral works play a significant role. Composers such as Bernard Zweers, Julius Röntgen, Johan Wagenaar, Alphons Diepenbrock laid the foundations for a distinctive identity of modern choral music in the Netherlands.

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Translated by Irina G. Latysheva

The influence of the general trends in European music resulted in the emergence of two contrasting tendencies in the evolution of Dutch music. The first, focused on preserving national traditions, is represented by the work of Hendrik Andriessen and his followers — Herman Strategier and Albert de Klerk. The second, aimed at incorporating avant-garde trends, is associated with Willem Pijper and his students, including Guillaume Louis Frédéric Landré, Henk Badings and Rudolf Escher. The works by Ton de Leeuw, Hans Kox and Louis Andriessen represent a culmination in the development of Dutch choral music in the twentieth century. Kox is known for creating large-scale vocal-symphonic compositions, closely related to existential themes. De Leeuw's works illustrate stylistic pluralism: the composer was influenced by both innovations in modern Western composition and traditional Eastern musical genres (Indian raga, Iranian maqam, etc.). Andriessen, known for his experiments in bridging elite and popular musical art, also combined modern compositional techniques with elements of early music — from *Ars antiqua* to early Baroque — in his works. Thus, despite the "late start" in the development of choral composition, Dutch choral music — in comparison with Italy, France and Germany — acquired a distinctive character during the 20th century, marked by a continuing connection between bold contemporary experimentation and the centuries-old traditions of Dutch music.

Keywords: choral music, Netherlands, Pijper, Andriessen, de Leeuw, choral texture, vocal timbres

For citation: Ryzhinsky, A. S. (2026). Dutch choral music of the twentieth century: A dialogue between experiment and tradition. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 106–130. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-106-130

Классики XX века

Научная статья

Нидерландская хоровая музыка XX века: диалог эксперимента и традиции

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена анализу основных путей развития хоровой музыки Нидерландов в XX веке. «Ренессанс голландской музыки» (выражение Герберта Энтклиффа), обусловленный резко активизировавшейся в конце XIX века концертной жизнью страны и развитием музыкального образования, привел к появлению целого ряда оригинальных сочинений, среди которых важное место занимают хоровые опусы. Такие мастера, как Бернард Зверс, Юлиус Рёнтген, Йохан Вагенар, Альфонс Дипенброк заложили крепкую основу для формирования самобытного, узнаваемого лица современной хоровой музыки Нидерландов. Влияние общих процессов европейского музыкального искусства проявило себя в возникновении двух оппозиционных линий в эволюции нидерландской музыки. Первая из них, ориентированная на сохранение национальных традиций, представлена творчеством Хендрика

Андриссена и его последователями — Германом Штратегиром, Альбертом де Клерком. Вторая, направленная на внедрение авангардных веяний, связана с деятельностью Виллема Пейпера и его учеников Гийома Луи Фредерика Ландре, Хенка Бадингса, Рудольфа Эшера. Кульминацией в развитии нидерландской хоровой музыки прошлого столетия можно признать творчество Тона де Лейфа, Ханса Кокса и Луи Андриссена. С именем Кокса связано создание наиболее масштабных вокально-симфонических композиций, тесно связанных с экзистенциальной тематикой. Творчество де Лейфа — образец стилевого плюрализма: на композитора оказали влияние как новации в развитии современной западной композиции, так и традиционные жанры восточной музыки (индийская рага, иранский макам и др.). Луи Андриссен, известный своими экспериментами по сближению элитарного и массового музыкального искусства, кроме того, объединял в своих сочинениях элементы современных техник композиции с техническими элементами старинной музыки — от *Ars antiqua* до раннего барокко. Таким образом, несмотря на «позднее включение» в процесс развития хоровой композиции, в сравнении с Италией, Францией и Германией, нидерландская хоровая музыка приобрела в течение XX века свой оригинальный облик, отличительными особенностями которого явилась постоянно сохраняемая связь между смелыми экспериментами сегодняшнего дня и многовековыми традициями нидерландской композиции.

Ключевые слова: хоровая музыка, Нидерланды, Виллем Пейпер, Луи Андриссен, Тон де Лейф, хоровая фактура, вокальная тембрика

Для цитирования: *Рыжинский А. С.* Нидерландская хоровая музыка XX века: диалог эксперимента и традиции // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 106–130.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-106-130

Introduction

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, composers from countries that had for several preceding centuries been virtually "invisible" on the musical map of the world began to play a noticeable role in the development of European choral music. In this context, the history of Dutch choral composition appears particularly intriguing, given the foundational significance of the Franco-Flemish masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for the development of European music as a whole. Although even the most substantial choral works created in the Netherlands in the twentieth century can scarcely be regarded as defining the collective profile of European choral music of that period, their study nevertheless clearly testifies to the revival of an autonomous compositional school.

It cannot be said that Dutch choral music of the last hundred years has been thoroughly studied. Musicologists have focused on the work of individual composers, without emphasizing their choral works [1; 2; 3; 4], or else the Dutch tradition has been integrated into pan-European processes of compositional technique development [5]. The purpose of this article is to summarize the available information on the development of Dutch choral art, as well as to formulate conclusions about the main features of choral composition in the last century.

"The Renaissance of Dutch Music"[1]

A harbinger of the revival of the Dutch compositional school was the construction of the Concertgebouw and the founding of the orchestra of the same name in 1888.[2] Five years earlier, the Amsterdam Conservatory had been established as a result of the dedicated efforts of Julius Röntgen, Frans Coenen, Daniël de Lange,

[1] The phrase "Renaissance of Dutch music" was first used in 1924 by the British musicologist Herbert Antcliffe in reference to the work of Dutch composers of the first quarter of the twentieth century—Julius Röntgen, Johan Wagenaar, Bernard Zweers, and Alphons Diepenbrock [1].

[2] The importance of this event can hardly be overstated. In his article devoted to the reception of the oratorio works of Johann Sebastian Bach in the Netherlands, I. van Gessel, pointing to the crucial educational mission of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, writes: "…as late as 1874 the incomprehension of Dutch audiences for Bach's masterpiece [i.e., the St. Matthew Passion.—*A.R.*] would cause an idealist conductor to break down in tears, but that twenty-five years later Dutch musical life had managed to get its act together and was finally ready to embark on a performance tradition of international standing" [7, p. 164–165].

and Bernard Zweers. Of these figures, the latter deserves particular attention. Bernard Zweers (1854–1924)—composer, choirmaster, and pedagogue—consistently emphasized throughout his career the primacy of his native country's artistic heritage. This was reflected not only in the predominance of national imagery in his works (ranging from depictions of the Dutch landscape to evocations of Vermeer and Rembrandt) and in the use of folkloric motifs, but also in his principled restriction of vocal compositions to Dutch-language texts—a choice that naturally limited their dissemination beyond the country's borders.

Zweers's authority in the Netherlands was so great that he was entrusted with composing the *Coronation Cantata* for the accession of Queen Wilhelmina in 1890, as well as the Preludes and Choruses for Joost van den Vondel's play *Gijsbrecht van Aemstel* for the opening of the Amsterdam Municipal Theatre in 1894. On the whole, Zweers's choral works can scarcely be described as original: they are characterized by predominantly chordal writing, a clear tonal foundation, and harmonic language oriented toward the German *Liedertafel* tradition. At the same time, one should note the vocal comfort of Zweers's music, undoubtedly connected with his activity as a choral conductor.[3]

The formation of the cantata-oratorio genre in Dutch music is closely associated with the name of Johan Wagenaar (1862–1941)—composer, conductor, organist, the first director of the Utrecht Conservatory (1904–1919), and subsequently one of the directors of the Royal Conservatory in The Hague (1919–1937), the oldest conservatory in the Netherlands. Wagenaar's first cantata, *De Schipbreuk* (*The Shipwreck*, 1889), already reveals his distinctive satirical gift and his ability to create vivid parodies. Among the principal targets of his criticism were operatic and concert performances devoid of substantive depth and designed merely to entertain audiences with clichéd and often nonsensical plots. This satirical line would later be continued in the cantatas *De fortuinlijke kist* (*The Lucky Chest*, 1916) and *Jupiter Amans* (1925).

[3] Amateur choral music-making has remained highly popular in the Netherlands for centuries. This is due not only to the active participation of much of the population in Catholic and Protestant worship services, but also to the distinctive unifying role of choral performance, which corresponds to what is described in Dutch scholarly and journalistic literature as "the national sense of solidarity" [8, p. 14].

Alongside its topical content, the music itself undoubtedly held considerable interest for audiences. An analysis of the cantata *De Schipbreuk* reveals a wide variety of textural solutions—from the chordal writing characteristic also of Zweers's scores to complex polyphonic episodes. Particularly noteworthy is the inclusion of choral monophony, antiphonal exchanges between male and female choirs, and passages of homophonic-harmonic texture, within which the relatively new technique—entering common practice only in the final quarter of the nineteenth century—of singing with closed mouth is employed.

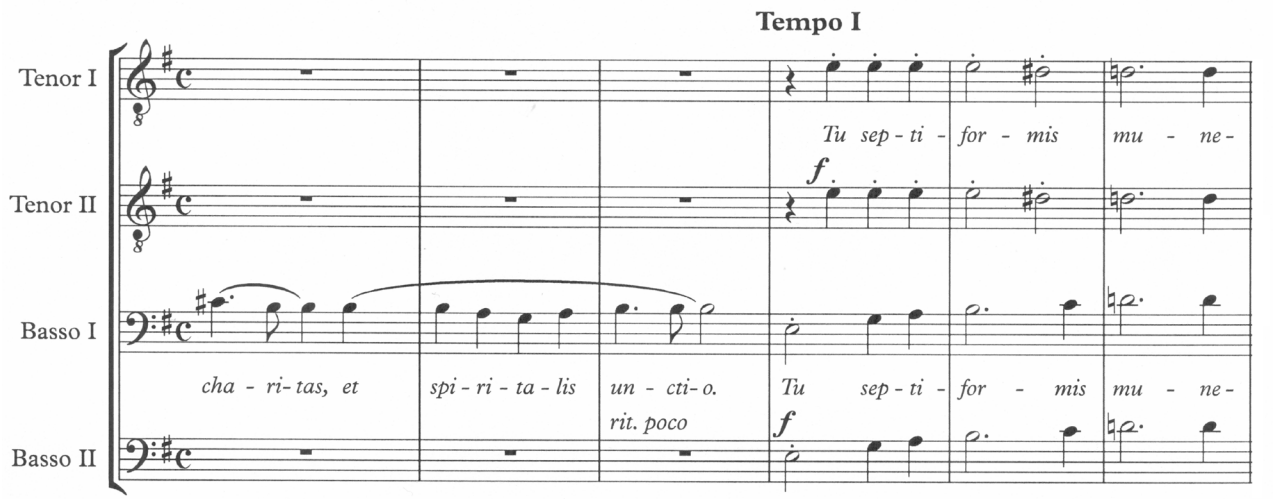
A special place among the composers of the first generation of the revived Dutch compositional school belongs to Alphons Diepenbrock (1862–1921). Despite lacking formal conservatory training,[4] this outstanding musician, through his study of the legacy of early Netherlandish masters and the works of nineteenth-century European Romantic composers, developed a distinctive musical voice of his own. Deeply interested in choral music, he composed dozens of works for various vocal forces—female, male, and mixed ensembles, both a cappella and with instrumental accompaniment. Unlike Zweers and Wagenaar, Diepenbrock did not confine himself primarily to texts by Dutch poets. His choral works are distinguished by the high literary quality of the texts he selected—an attribute reflecting not only his philological education but also his own literary talent. Alphons Diepenbrock was known as an essayist and contributed extensively to the journals *De Amsterdammer*, *De Nieuwe Gids*, and *De Kroniek*. Among his favored authors were Goethe, Hölderlin, Novalis, Brentano, Heine, Baudelaire, Verlaine, and other prominent European poets.

Combining a late-Romantic harmonic language, akin to that of Mahler and Richard Strauss, with a polyphonic organization oriented toward the traditions of the early Franco-Flemish composers, Diepenbrock created large-scale choral works characterized by flexible interaction among diverse textural types. In many compositions one encounters the use of canonic writing, typically associated with the introduction of text of particular semantic importance. Such examples may be found in the male chorus *Tibur* (1884) and the mixed chorus *Dämmerung* (1884).

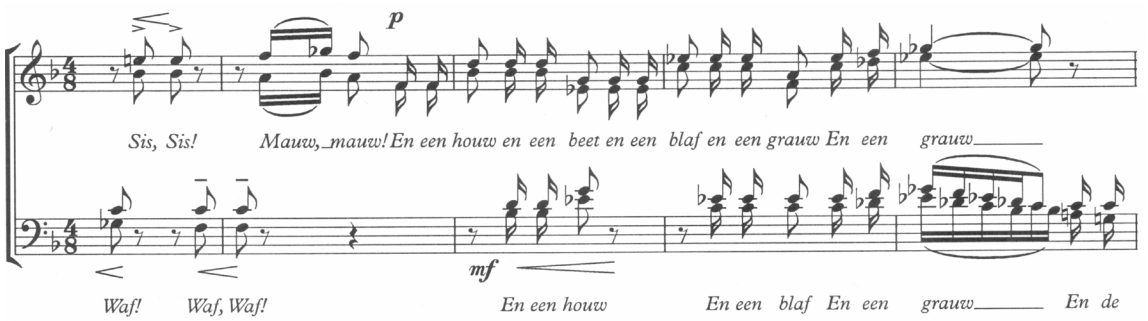
[4] The composer graduated from the University of Amsterdam with a degree in philology and defended a doctoral dissertation devoted to the life and thought of the Roman philosopher Seneca the Younger.

The majority of the composer's works reveal an orientation toward the principles of motet-like strophic design: Diepenbrock strives for detailed reflection of the nuances of the literary text, employing tonal, tempo-related, and textural contrasts. Among the latter are frequent juxtapositions of chordal and antiphonal writing, as well as chordal and imitative-polyphonic textures. Homophonic-harmonic texture is used more rarely; in such cases, clear differentiation of foreground and background may be achieved not only through dynamics but also through articulation. Thus, for example, in the second strophe of the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* for male choir and organ (1906), the bass melody marked *legato* unfolds against the detached articulation of the tenor parts (*Example 1*).

Active use of antiphony is likewise characteristic of Diepenbrock's works. Most often, the composer juxtaposes male and female voices—in scores written for mixed choir—or contrasts high and low voices in compositions for homogeneous ensembles. In the vocal quartet *De groote hon en de kleine kat* (*The Big Dog and the Little Cat*, 1903), the antiphonal exchanges between female and male voices, combined with onomatopoeic effects, become an important means of musical characterization (*Example 2*). The creation of such a humorous musical piece may also be viewed as a continuation of the Netherlandish tradition of rendering comic scenes from everyday life in music—one recalls *El grillo* by Josquin des Prez or *Ad altre le voi dare* by Orlando di Lasso.



Example 1. Alphons Diepenbrock. *Veni Creator Spiritus*, bars 25–30



Example 2. Alphons Diepenbrock. *De groote hon en de kleine kat*, bars 21–25

Diepenbrock's equal attention to sacred and secular music, to philosophical lyricism and to humorous miniatures, reveals him as a worthy successor to the traditions of early Netherlandish music, whose development had been interrupted in the seventeenth century. In the apt formulation of Ekaterina D. Devyatko, "Diepenbrock's multifaceted activity played a key role in the emergence of a new stage in the development of Dutch musical art—the beginnings of compositional individualism characteristic of the practice of his successors, the Dutch composers of the twentieth century" [2, c. 203]. As the most significant musical figure of his generation, Diepenbrock, in his conscious aspiration to restore the Netherlands' standing in European musical culture, largely determined the directions of creative inquiry pursued by the composers of the second generation of the "Dutch musical renaissance": Hendrik Andriessen (1892–1981) and Willem Pijper (1894–1947)—the first Dutch composers to receive their professional training in their homeland (Andriessen as a student of Zweers, Pijper as a student of Wagenaar).

Hendrik Andriessen—Willem Pijper: Two Principal Branches in the Evolution of Dutch Music in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

A comparison of Andriessen and Pijper reveals significant differences in their views on the paths of modern music's development. Pijper was to a considerable extent receptive to avant-garde tendencies in the arts, whereas Andriessen oriented himself primarily toward the established canons found in the works of his older contemporaries. At the same time, the choral output of both composers is united by an evident connection with the traditions of early Netherlandish music.

This connection manifests itself in the modal foundation of their harmonic language and in the melodic shaping of the individual voices that form the choral vertical. Although Pijper composed exclusively secular choral works, while Andriessen—himself the son of a church organist[5]—was predominantly drawn to sacred composition, their works are united by a preference for traditional textural types and a classical approach to the treatment of choral timbre.

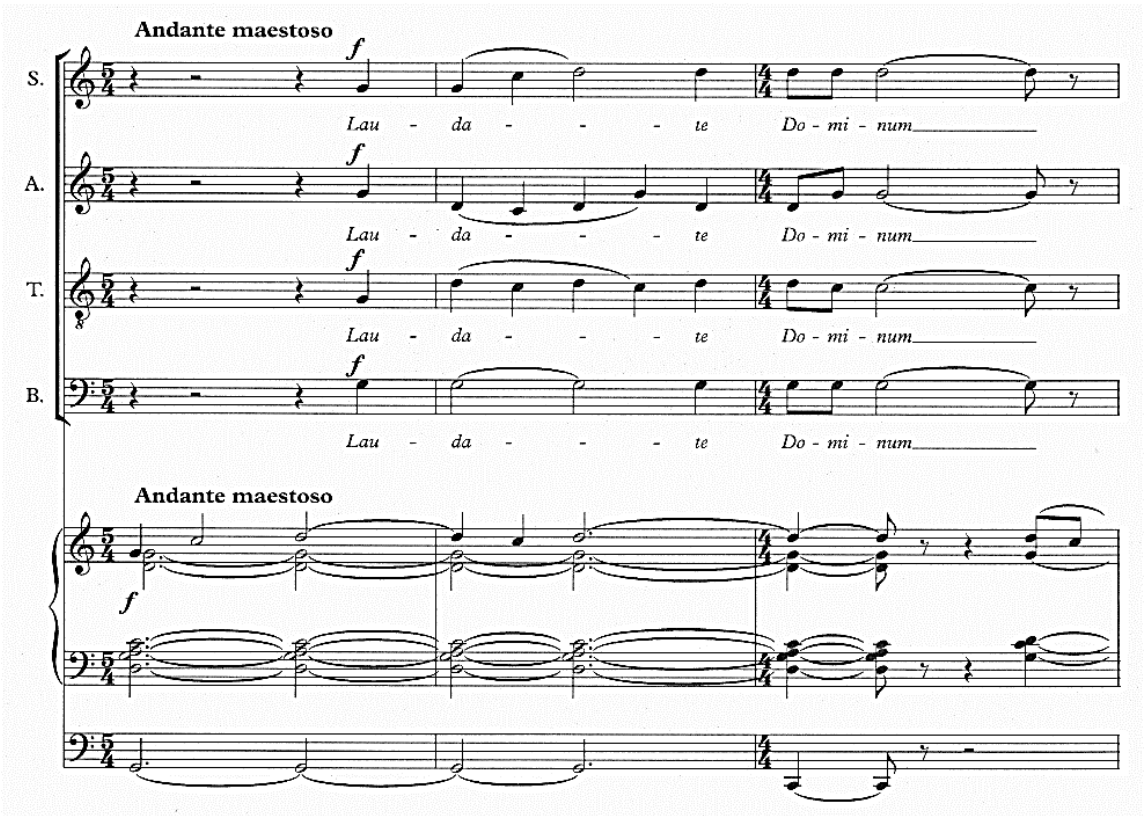
Nevertheless, a study of Andriessen's works in comparison with those of his predecessors and even certain contemporaries—for example, another student of Zweers, Ernest Willem Mulder[6] (1898–1959)—leads to the conclusion that the sonority of sacred music underwent a substantial transformation. Rejecting the Romantic hyperbolization of textural and harmonic means characteristic of the second half of the nineteenth century, Andriessen restored to church compositions a meditative concentration and mystical simplicity grounded in clear harmonic structures. One also notes his frequent use of unison or octave doubling across all vocal parts, as well as his sensitivity to the harmonic color of pure intervals (*Example 3*)—distinctive musical "archaisms" in Andriessen's scores that are clearly oriented toward recreating the sonority of pre-tonal music.

In contrast to the relative uniformity of Hendrik Andriessen's works in their harmonic and textural design, Pijper's compositions written before and after 1920 differ markedly. In the works of his first creative decade, one encounters the same intonational and textural points of reference as in the music of his teacher Johan Wagenaar: three- and four-part harmonic writing with a clearly recognizable tonal foundation, cast in simple strophic forms. With the double-choir a cappella work *Heer Halewijn* (*Lord Halewijn*, 1920), set to the text of an ancient Dutch ballad, Pijper decisively abandoned classical-Romantic tonality in favor of freely treated dissonance freed from obligatory resolution—an approach clearly reflecting the influence of the Second Viennese School, particularly Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern.[7]

[5] Hendrik Andriessen was born into the family of Nicolaas Andriessen, organist of the Church of St. Joseph in Haarlem.

[6] The Dutch composer Ernest Willem Mulder, like Hendrik Andriessen, was primarily known for his church music. Among his works, a special place was occupied by vocal-symphonic compositions closely resembling the sound world of French composers, especially the music of César Franck—the *Requiem* (1927–1932), *Stabat Mater* (1948), and *Te Deum* (1951).

[7] On Pijper's attitude to the music of the Second Viennese School see [5, p. 143–145].



Example 3. Hendrik Andriessen. *Laudate Dominum*, bars 1–3

Similar solutions characterize his subsequent choral works based on Dutch folk sources: *Heer Daniëlken* (*Lord Daniëlken*) for double choir a cappella (1925) and *Van den Coninc van Castilien* (*Van den Coninc of Castile*) for four-part male choir (1936). Through these compositions Pijper gained recognition abroad as the leading representative of the Dutch musical avant-garde. It was he who represented the Netherlands at the founding meeting of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in Salzburg in 1922 and who subsequently headed its Dutch section.

It is striking that in Pijper's works written from 1920 onward, resources of chromatic tonality, polytonality, and even atonality are combined with texts of traditional Dutch ballads. Although Pijper collected examples of Dutch folklore throughout his life, in his choral works he made use exclusively of their textual

component. This choice may reflect, as in the case of his teacher Zweers, a conscious orientation toward the creation of a distinctly national Dutch musical art.

Among those who made a significant contribution to the subsequent development of Dutch choral music were the students of Willem Pijper (Guillaume Landré and Henk Badings) and those of Hendrik Andriessen (Herman Strategier and Albert de Klerk). Each of these "evolutionary branches" of Dutch music preserved the defining traits of its founder. Strategier and de Klerk became the authors of numerous sacred works oriented toward the traditions of their teacher Andriessen. Landré and Badings, by contrast, demonstrated an orientation toward the key achievements of contemporary music. These differences were also conditioned by the specific professional contexts in which the composers worked.

Herman Strategier (1912–1988), a graduate of the Roman Catholic School of Church Music in Utrecht who subsequently combined the roles of church organist and composer, devoted himself primarily to liturgical composition: three Masses for choir a cappella, 21 Masses for choir with organ, and dozens of antiphons, psalms, and motets. Even in his secular works he often turned to sacred themes, as in the vocal-symphonic compositions *Cantica pro tempore natali* (*Songs for Christmastide*, 1953), *Arnhemsche psalm* (*Arnhem Psalm*, 1955), and *Rembrandtcantate* (1956). Like Andriessen, Strategier paid particular attention to unaccompanied choral writing, incorporating a cappella passages not only in works with organ but also in vocal-symphonic compositions. One example is found in the opening measures of *Arnhemsche psalm*, where the octave doubling of the unaccompanied choir evokes associations with the Gregorian chant that traditionally precedes movements of the early Mass. It should also be noted that Strategier was an active choral conductor; his ensemble, the Madrigal Choir of Leiden, was known for its performances of Franco-Flemish repertoire of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Another student of Andriessen, Albert de Klerk (1912–1998), likewise combined the activities of composer and church organist throughout his life. Even before graduating from the Amsterdam Conservatory, he succeeded his teacher in 1934 as organist of St. Joseph's Church in Haarlem, a position he held until his death. Though not as prolific as Strategier, he nonetheless left a mark on the sacred music of the second

half of the twentieth century with such works as the Mass *Mater Sanctaelaetitiae* for women's choir and organ (1948), the Mass *Sancti Pape Pii Decimi* for mixed choir and organ (1956), and *Te Deum* for mezzo-soprano, choir, and orchestra (1979). The diatonic foundation of his works—based largely on the use of church modes—is combined with vivid major-minor harmonies, evoking associations not only with Andriessen but also with the music of Francis Poulenc and Darius Milhaud.

An alternative line to the fundamentally traditional choral idiom of Strategier and de Klerk was represented by the students of Willem Pijper. Although they concentrated primarily on symphonic and chamber-instrumental music, they also contributed to choral composition with works marked by experimentation with new compositional techniques and even novel timbral effects. One of Pijper's earliest students, Guillaume Landré (1905–1968), under his teacher's influence began to explore not only the expressive properties of dissonance but also numerical combinations shaping the intonational and rhythmic organization of music.[8] This interest largely explains Landré's engagement with serial dodecaphony, particularly with such derivative procedures as rotation and permutation. Even in his vocal works he employed pitch series based on diatonic successions of six to eight tones. Like Pijper, Landré worked with Dutch-language texts, though he preferred original poetry to folklore. Among his favored poets were Leo Braat[9] (*Groet der martelaren—Greeting of the Martyrs* 1944) and *Anna de Vries*[10] (*Berceuse voor moede mensen—Berceuse for Weary People*, 1952).

[8] Willem Pijper's initiation into a Masonic lodge in 1938 shaped the composer's interest in one of the most important Kabbalistic methods of interpretation—gematria, based on uncovering the hidden meaning of a verbal text through the numerical values of its constituent letters. A number of works from his final decade were preceded by numerical calculations relating to intonational formulas and formal proportions. Landré also employed technical devices grounded in numerical manipulation. Their presence is reflected even in the titles of certain orchestral compositions: *Permutazioni sinfoniche* (*Symphonic Permutations*, 1957) and *Anagrammen* (*Anagrams*, 1960).

[9] Leo Braat (1908–1982) was a Dutch poet, sculptor, art historian, and editor of the journal *Kroniek van Kunst en Kultuur* (*Chronicle of Art and Culture*).

[10] Anne de Vries (1904–1964) was a Dutch writer and poet, known for his series of books about Bartje Bartels, which enjoyed great popularity in the Netherlands.

A special place in mid-twentieth-century Dutch choral music is occupied by the work of Henk Badings (1907–1987), one of the most prolific composers of his time and the author of more than one thousand compositions, around eighty of which are choral works. Although he discontinued his studies with Willem Pijper due to creative disagreements, Badings owed his early experiments in symphonic music to Pijper, experiments that brought him his first success and attracted the attention of the distinguished Dutch conductor Willem Mengelberg. Until the early 1950s, Badings's works demonstrated an orientation toward Romantic models, evident in their traditional tonal-harmonic language and adherence to strophic form. One of the most notable compositions of this period is the cycle *Vier geestelijke liederen* (*Four Sacred Songs*) for a cappella choir (1941), which, somewhat unexpectedly, recalls not so much the works of Pijper's school as the compositions of Hendrik Andriessen and his students, with their clear tonal foundation and predominance of chordal and homophonic-harmonic textures.

In the 1950s, Badings became one of the first composers in the Netherlands to experiment with electronic sound. During these years, he worked at the studio of the Delft University of Technology. Following Italian (Gian Carlo Menotti) and German (Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Hans Werner Henze) composers, Badings turned to the genre of radio opera. His first work in this genre, the radio opera *Orestes* (1954), already revealed remarkable acoustic innovations. In particular, to create fantastic sound effects, the composer employed the acceleration and deceleration of a pre-recorded male choir.

These experiments anticipated by nearly two decades the manipulation of previously recorded choral sound in Karlheinz Stockhausen's heptalogy *Licht* (specifically, "Unsichtbare Chöre" from the opera *Donnerstag*). The experience gained in composing radio operas[11] later proved valuable in Badings's exploration of the spatial separation of live and pre-recorded sound within a single composition. Such innovations appear in *Genesis* (1967) for male choir, percussion, and tape, as well as in *Cantata No. 7 Ballade van die bloeddorstige Jagter* (1970) for soloists, choir, orchestra, and tape.

[11] Henk Badings composed two radio operas—*Orestes* (1954) and *Asterion* (1957)—as well as one television opera *Salto mortale* (1959).

Drawing not only on the legacy of his Dutch predecessors but also actively incorporating the innovations of post-war avant-garde compositional techniques, Henk Badings created works that achieved broad recognition both in the Netherlands and abroad. It was therefore Badings who laid the foundation for the international reputation of Dutch academic music (including choral music), a reputation further strengthened by the activities of the next generation of composers, most notably Ton de Leeuw and Louis Andriessen.

Dutch Choral Composition in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century: from the Students of Henk Badings to Louis Andriessen

Successfully combining traditional and the most advanced compositional techniques, Badings achieved considerable recognition not only in his own country but also abroad—in Germany, France, the United States, and even Australia. In the Netherlands, he maintained an extensive pedagogical practice. Among his students were Ton de Leeuw and Hans Kox—composers whose names are largely associated with the development of Dutch choral music from the 1960s to the 1990s. The former, Ton de Leeuw (1926–1996), was one of the most significant figures in Dutch cultural life: a composer, music producer at the country's principal broadcasting organization, the Nederlandse Radio Unie, director and artistic director of the Amsterdam Conservatory, and visiting lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley.

De Leeuw's oeuvre provides a compelling illustration of the well-known thesis of cultural pluralism as one of the defining characteristics of contemporary music.[12] From his youth, he was interested in various religious concepts related not only to Christianity but also to Eastern cosmological doctrines. Beginning as a composer oriented toward the music of Bartók, Pijper, and Badings (with whom he studied from 1947 to 1949), de Leeuw subsequently became fascinated with neo-modal technique in the spirit of Messiaen, in whose class he studied for several months in 1949–1950. A formative event for the young composer was his attendance at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music in 1953, where he encountered the works of Anton Webern. Thereafter,

[12] Let us cite a passage from an article by Hicran Alieva: "Composers now draw inspiration from a wide array of cultural traditions, resulting in eclectic and dynamic choral works" [9, p. 6].

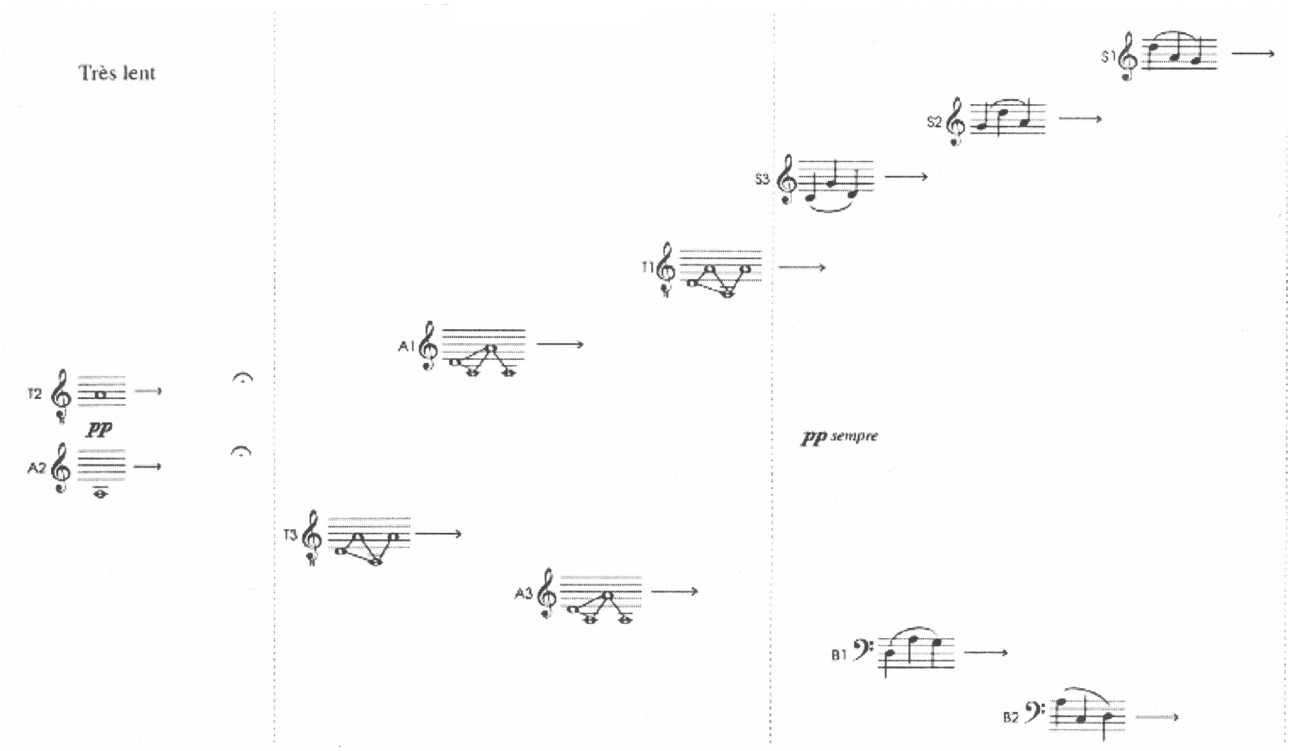
he became the creator of the first examples of Dutch serialism. This compositional method primarily affected his instrumental music. By contrast, in his choral works of the same period (*Missa brevis* for mixed choir, 1952; *Vier koorliederen* [*Four Choral Songs*] for mixed choir a cappella on texts by anonymous medieval Dutch poets, 1953), de Leeuw adhered to relatively traditional means, composing music based on medieval modes, emphasizing pure intervals, and actively employing monophony and chordal textures.

His meeting with John Cage in 1958, as well as travels to Iran and India, led to a radical shift in the direction of his artistic development. The composer became deeply engaged in the study of Indian rāgas, the Iranian maqām, and the traditions of Japanese Noh theatre, acquainting himself with theoretical writings devoted to these Eastern traditions. At the same time, he studied scores by early masters—from Ars antiqua to the Renaissance—discovering significant parallels in the very perception of musical time between pre-classical European compositions and traditional Eastern music. According to de Leeuw, what unites these seemingly polar traditions is modality in a broad sense of the term (which he referred to as "extended modality"), positioned in opposition not only to serialism but also to chromatic tonality and atonality:

> "Extended modality" is in a certain sense a reappreciation, a generalization and an extension of earlier modal principles, put into twentieth-century perspective. It is also a reaction to the impasse reached in our music, and is foreign to the background that bred both late western tonality and atonality [10, p. 83].

The composer frequently bases a work on the combination of various melodic formulas, both within a single horizontal line and in the superimposition of several voices, which accounts for the consistent use of monophony and heterophony in his music. A notable example of this approach is the choral score *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* (*Our Vineyards Are in Blossom*, 1983). The opening of the composition is constructed through the gradual expansion of the number of choral parts performing sustained tones or short melodic formulas—outside a fixed rhythm or only partially rhythmized. The principle of adding choral voices strongly recalls techniques previously encountered in post-war avant-garde scores by Luigi Nono (*Cori di Didone*, 1958) and György Ligeti (*Lux aeterna*, 1966): from the initial introduction of the central alto and tenor parts to the symmetrical expansion of the texture

through the addition of upper and lower voices (*Example 4*). This textural solution also corresponds to the prescribed spatial arrangement of the singers on stage[13] (*Example 5*): in the first section, the formulas are introduced in a "centrifugal" manner, while in the third section they enter successively from left (soprano parts) to right (bass parts).



Example 4. Ton de Leeuw. *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*, bars 1–3

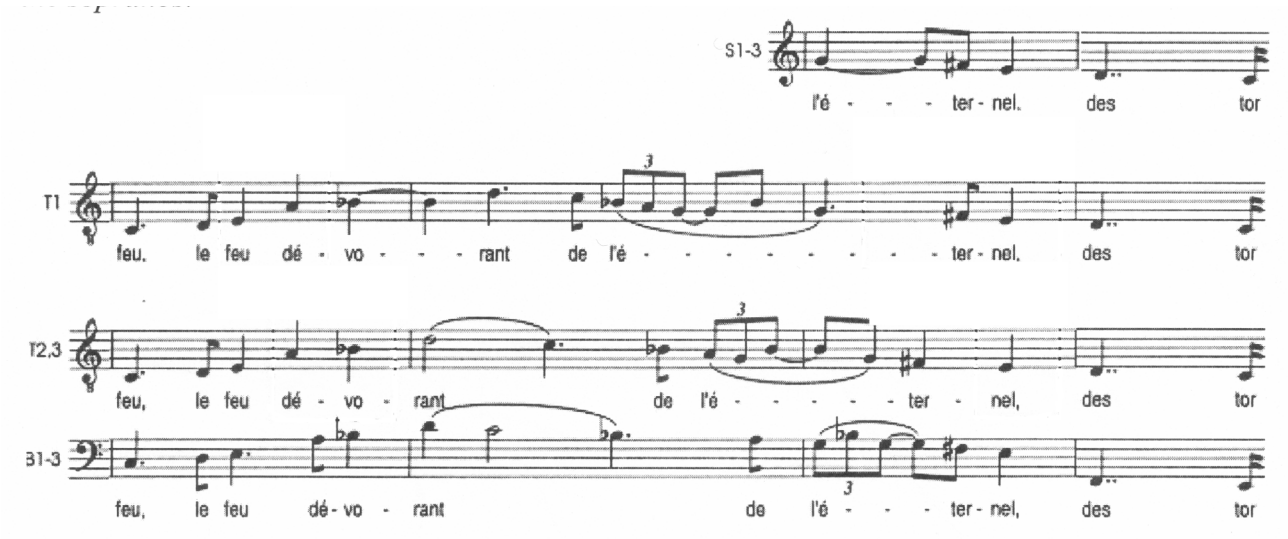
In constructing melodic horizontals from these formulas, de Leeuw employs a set of rhythmic models, used both independently and in combination. This approach

[13] It should be noted that Ton de Leeuw consistently employed the resources of spatial music. Striking examples include such vocal-instrumental and chamber-instrumental works as *Haiku II* (1968) and *Spatial Music I–IV* (1966–1968). In the former (*Haiku II*), the soprano moves between six points within the performance space—a solution strongly reminiscent of the celebrated anti-opera *Passaggio* (1961–1962) by Luciano Berio.

S1 S2 S3 T1 A1 T2 A2 T3 A3 B1 B2 B3

Example 5. Ton de Leeuw. *Car nos vignes sont en fleur:*
spatial arrangement of the singers

is also applied in the superimposition of several variants of a single horizontal line, producing a more structurally defined heterophony in comparison with the opening measures of the work (*Example 6*).



Example 6. Ton de Leeuw. *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*, bars 68–71

The principal vocal techniques employed by Ton de Leeuw integrate organically into the atmosphere of "neo-archaism" characteristic of his works. Alongside conventional choral singing (normal singing), he makes use of Sprechgesang, as well as non-notated recitation on abstract syllables; an important role is also played by occasional microtonal intonation (the singing of quarter-tones).

Like Giacinto Scelsi—who, after experimenting with avant-garde techniques, reoriented himself toward the study of ancient music and combined

modality-based musical language with archaic literary texts—de Leeuw, beginning in 1970, turned to biblical texts in his choral works (the aforementioned *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* for twelve-part mixed choir a cappella, as well as *Élégie pour les villes détruites—Elegy for the Destroyed Cities*, 1994), Native American myths (*The Birth of Music* for mixed choir a cappella, 1975), the hymns of Kabir[14] (*Five Hymns* for mixed choir, two pianos, and percussion, 1987–1988), fragments of Indian music-theoretical treatises (*The Magic of Music I* for two-part choir, 1970), and the treatise of Shitao[15] (*Cloudy Forms* for male choir a cappella, 1970).

A similar shift of emphasis in choral content toward religious-philosophical and, more broadly, existential lyricism also characterizes the work of Hans Kox (1930–2019). Among the principal influences evident in his early compositions were the works of Badings, Berg, and Mahler. From the latter, Kox inherited an interest in large-scale vocal-symphonic compositions devoted to fundamental questions of human existence—the purpose of life and the problem of moral choice in times of trial. Among his best-known works are *Requiem for Europe* for four (!) choirs, two organs, and orchestra on texts by Paul Celan, the Bible, and the composer himself (1971); the cantata *Anne Frank* for soloists, choir, and orchestra (1984), based on the famous diary of Anne Frank; the vocal-symphonic composition *Das Credo quia absurdum* for soloists, choir, and orchestra on texts from the Bible, the Qur'an, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Rainer Maria Rilke (1995); and *Symphony No. 6* for mixed choir and orchestra on texts by Nietzsche and Celan (2012).

Although Kox began his career as a church organist, in his religious-philosophical compositions he did not confine himself exclusively to Christian sources. While critical of contemporary international politics, he nevertheless followed global events with deep concern, expressing profound sympathy for the victims of interreligious

[14] Kabir (1440–1518) was a medieval Indian poet and preacher. His hymns are included in the sacred scripture of Sikhism—the monotheistic religion that emerged at the intersection of Hindu and Islamic ideas—the *Adi Granth*, the compilation of which was completed in 1604.
[15] Shitao (1642–1707) was a Chinese painter and theorist of painting, the author of the treatise *Round of Discussions on Painting* (*Huayu Lu*).

and interethnic conflicts. Humanism constitutes the fundamental theme uniting Kox's works across genres. Addressing a broad audience, Hans Kox did not abandon the tonal foundation of his musical language, favoring traditional harmonic as well as timbral-textural resources. A distinguishing feature of Kox's music is its clear melodic foundation, evoking associations, on the one hand, with the works of Gustav Mahler and, on the other, with those of Hendrik Andriessen. One may also speak of the indirect influence of the post-war avant-garde, manifested in particular in his engagement with ideas of spatial music.[16] For example, in *Requiem for Europe* Kox adopts Karlheinz Stockhausen's concept (from *Carré*, 1960) of the isolated placement of four choirs around the audience in combination with instrumental groups.

Interaction with tradition at a new stage is likewise demonstrated in the work of the most internationally renowned Dutch composer of the last quarter of the twentieth century, Louis Andriessen (1939–2021). He began studying composition with his father, Hendrik Andriessen, and from 1957 at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague with Kees van Baaren; between 1961 and 1965 he studied with Luciano Berio, through whom he became acquainted with a wide range of pre-war and post-war avant-garde works. Through his active public engagement, Andriessen demonstrated a rejection of bourgeois morality, embracing ideas associated with anarchism and Maoism. Largely under the influence of his socio-political views, he moved away from avant-garde techniques, gravitating in his restrained, anti-expressive manner toward the musical ideas of Igor Stravinsky—the composer whom Andriessen ranked above all others among the masters of the first half of the twentieth century. In 1983, in his book on Stravinsky *The Apollonian Clockwork* (written in collaboration with Elmer Schönberger), Andriessen wrote:

> The true influence of Stravinsky has only just begun. […] It is the type of influence inspired by misunderstanding, the deliberate distortion, the good wrong conclusion [12, p. 6].

[16] In an article devoted to trends in the development of post-war avant-garde choral music, we have already noted that stereophony in the second half of the twentieth century became one of the most characteristic features of choral and vocal-ensemble compositions. In a number of works by Karlheinz Stockhausen (from *Carré* to *Engel-Prozessionen*), Luigi Nono (*Ha venido: canciones para Silvia, Sarà dolce tacere, Das atmende Klarsein*), and György Ligeti (*Requiem*, *Lux aeterna*), we observe a deliberate use of textural and timbral resources to achieve spatial effects. For more detail, see [11].

The composer repeatedly emphasized: “Stravinsky was my real example of how to deal with musical material in the 20th century” (as cited in [3, p. 112]). Through his immersion in Stravinsky’s oeuvre, Andriessen discovered a universal method that enabled him to work with stylistically heterogeneous material while achieving a convincing artistic result:

> The musical material which I use changes over the years, because I have other musical interests. But my approach will not change, it will always be the same.
>
> The best example is the approach of someone like Igor Stravinsky, who doesn’t really care about something like style or personality, but who cares about music. I think that’s more or less the ideal approach towards the profession: that you care more about what you think you have to tell about music than how to express yourself (as cited in [4, p. 17]).

One of the first works with which Andriessen made a striking public statement was *De staat* (*The State*, 1972–1976) for four female voices and instruments. The ensemble—comprising classical instruments (two harps, four violas, two pianos, sixteen wind instruments) and popular instruments (four electric guitars and bass guitar)—as well as the modal basis of the work and the predominantly monophonic writing for the four female voices, testify to its “anti-avant-garde” and accordingly “anti-bourgeois” orientation. Moreover, the recourse to vocal monody (marked legatissimo, senza vibrato) with only rare harmonic interpolations may also reflect an association with ancient Greek monody, since the literary source of the composition is Plato’s dialogue of the same name, a fragment of which Andriessen includes in the original language.

It is also significant that during these years Louis Andriessen emerged as a politically engaged composer, creating in response to contemporary world events the songs of protest against the Vietnam War (*Thanh Hoa*, 1972; *Dat gebeurt in Vietnam*, 1973) and the political song *Laat toch vrij de straat* (*Let the Streets Be Free*, 1978). It is possible that the monolithic unison singing, combined with fragments of chordal texture in these Dutch “mass songs,” helped determine the two most characteristic modes of presentation in Andriessen’s choral and vocal-ensemble works—chordal texture and monophony. These features appear in *De stijl* (*Style*, 1984–1985),

Odysseus' Women (1995), and the scenic oratorio *De materie* (*Matter*, 1989),[17] as well as in a number of other, less widely known compositions.

Standing somewhat apart in this respect is the score *De tijd* (*Time*, 1980–1981), in which the women's choir is treated as an essential timbral component of the overall vocal-instrumental sonority. Based on a text by Augustine of Hippo devoted to the comparison of the categories of "time" and "eternity," the composition illustrates the opposition of these concepts through two polar types of temporal organization:

a) a pulsating type—sharply rhythmized through the opposition of binary and ternary meters;

b) a continual type—associated with the gradual transition of harmonies that seem to sound "outside time" (strongly recalling such works by György Ligeti as *Lontano* and *Lux aeterna*).

The verbal foundations of Andriessen's works reveal his interest in elite literature. Among his sources are philosophical writings by Plato, Laozi, and Augustine, as well as outstanding monuments of world literature (Homer's *Odyssey*, Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*). On the other hand, we also encounter examples of political literature among his sources—works by Mikhail Bakunin, Armand Arnoux, and Jaap van der Merwe. This striking combination invites comparison with the vocal oeuvre of Luigi Nono. At the same time, the democratic character—and at times even eccentricity—of Andriessen's musical language ensured the wide popularity and international performance demand of his compositions.

Conclusions

The emergence of such figures as Henk Badings, Ton de Leeuw, Louis Andriessen, and others makes it possible to regard the development of Dutch choral music as a unified and progressive process, within which several defining features may be identified:

[17] Turning to the genre of staged oratorio is one of the indications of Louis Andriessen's desire to reform traditional music theatre. In the article by Elena V. Kiseeva and Emma S. Korotkieva devoted to the specific features of the operatic genre in the works of Kaija Saariaho, the authors mention Louis Andriessen among those composers whose work was aimed at a fundamental renewal of opera. For more detail, see [13, p. 130].

1. A “late entry” into the process of choral compositional development in comparison with neighboring European countries—France, Germany, and United Kingdom;

2. The orientation of leading Dutch composers toward outstanding models from earlier musical epochs, above all the Renaissance;

3. The presence of two largely autonomous lines of development:

a) a traditional line—represented by composers inclined to follow the musical traditions of their own country;

b) an innovative line—associated with composers who sought to incorporate contemporary compositional techniques into their works.

The overall trajectory of Dutch choral composition—from the first stirrings of the “Dutch Renaissance” in the works of Bernard Zweers, Johan Wagenaar, and Alphons Diepenbrock to the appearance of works by Badings, de Leeuw, and Andriessen on international stages—enabled the Netherlands, several centuries after the close of the great era of the Franco-Flemish masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, once again to assert its significant place on the contemporary map of European choral composition.

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The article was submitted 14.01.2026; approved after reviewing 04.03.2026; accepted for publication 11.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 14.01.2026; одобрена после рецензирования 04.03.2026; принята к публикации 11.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Music at the Turn of the 21st Century

Original article
UDC 78.03
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-131-154
EDN PKVMHK

On Viktor Ekimovsky's minimalism*

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Abstract. The article explores the creative work of the prominent Russian composer Viktor Alekseyevich Ekimovsky (1947–2024). His compositions are diverse not only in their artistic and aesthetic concepts but also in their writing techniques. Categorizing his works based on the prevailing compositional method, Ekimovsky classified several of his pieces as minimalist. This study focuses on three works characterized by features inherent to minimalism as a method of musical composition: the percussion ensemble pieces *The Assumption*

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Translated by Irina G. Latysheva

and *27 Destructions*, as well as *Ninth Symphony* "*Epitaph to the Avant-Garde*"— the hundredth and final composition in the author's catalogue. Chronologically spanning the period from 1989 to 2017, these works demonstrate unique manifestations of minimalist technique in each specific case. The analysis primarily addresses the use of patterns within repetitive processes and the nature of the models repeated through various means. To interpret the structural patterns of these compositions, the study incorporates the composer's own reflections from his interviews and his book *Automonography*. The vocabulary employed by the composer serves as a distinctive indicator of his creative practice, which is inextricably linked to the process of self-reflection. The author's solutions in the analyzed compositions are characterized by: the synthesis of stable and mobile principles (*The Assumption*); structural combinatorics and the logic of textural transformations (*27 Destructions*); and the artistic embodiment of the concepts of "minimalism" and "macrominimalism" (*Ninth Symphony*), implying a progression "from simple to complex" (Movement 5) and vice versa (Movement 6).

Keywords: Viktor Ekimovsky, compositional technique, composer's reflections, minimalism, macrominimalism, *The Assumption*, *27 Destructions*, *Ninth Symphony* "*Epitaph to the Avant-Garde*"

For citation: Panteleeva, Yu. N. (2026). On Viktor Ekimovsky's minimalism. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 131–154.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-131-154

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* This article is based on a report presented at the Sixth International Conference "Technique of musical composition. Shostakovich in memoriam" (April 14–18, 2025). For many years, Victor A. Ekimovsky has served as an editor for the New Collected Works of Shostakovich in 150 volumes (DSCH Publishers) and the Collected Works in 42 volumes (Muzyka Publishers).

Современные проблемы музыкознания /
Contemporary Musicology
2026/10(1)

Музыкальное творчество рубежа XX–XXI столетий

Научная статья

О минимализме Виктора Екимовского*

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена творчеству известного российского композитора Виктора Алексеевича Екимовского (1947 – 2024). Сочинения этого автора многообразны не только по художественно-эстетическим идеям, но и по способам письма. Подразделяя свои произведения на основе преобладающей в них композиционной техники, Екимовский относил к минималистским ряд своих пьес. Наше внимание будет сфокусировано на трех произведениях, наделенных чертами, свойственными минимализму как методу музыкальной композиции. Речь идет о сочинениях для ансамбля ударных («Успение», «27 разрушений») и Девятой симфонии «Эпитафия авангарду» — последней, сотой композиции в каталоге Екимовского. Хронологически эти произведения вписываются в период с 1989 по 2017 год и демонстрируют в каждом отдельном случае специфическую форму воплощения минималистской

техники. Прежде всего имеется в виду работа с паттерном, осуществляемая в условиях репетитивного процесса, и сам облик повторяемой тем или иным способом модели. Интерпретируя закономерности структурного устройства названных сочинений, мы привлекаем композиторское слово, запечатленное в интервью Екимовского и его книге «Автомонография». Лексика, которой оперирует композитор, служит своеобразным индикатором его творческой практики, всегда неразрывно связанной с процессом самоосмысления. Авторские решения в рассматриваемых сочинениях отмечены: соединением стабильного и мобильного начал («Успение»), структурной комбинаторикой и логикой фактурных преобразований («27 разрушений»), художественным воплощением понятий «минимализм» и «макроминимализм» (Девятая симфония), подразумевающим развитие от «простого к сложному» (5 часть) и наоборот (6 часть).

Ключевые слова: Виктор Алексеевич Екимовский, композиционная техника, слово композитора, минимализм, макроминимализм, «Успение», «27 разрушений», Девятая симфония «Эпитафия авангарду»

Для цитирования: *Пантелеева Ю. Н.* О минимализме Виктора Екимовского // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. 131–154. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-131-154

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*Статья написана на основе доклада на Шестой международной научной конференции «Техника музыкальной композиции. Шостакович in memoriam» (14–18 апреля 2025 года). На протяжении многих лет В. А. Екимовский в качестве редактора работал над подготовкой Нового собрания сочинений Шостаковича в 150 томах (Изд-во DSCH) и Собрания сочинений в 42 томах (Изд-во «Музыка»).

Introduction

Viktor Alekseyevich Ekimovsky (1947–2024, *Illustration 1*) was a prominent Russian composer who steadfastly followed his self-declared creative motto: "the new must be new in every conceivable respect" [1, p. 251]. This did not imply "novelty on a global scale" [1, p. 250], but rather a novelty that would distinguish each subsequent work from preceding opuses or, in the author's terminology, "compositions." "This is my general principle," Ekimovsky stated, "I always strive to write different music and not to repeat ideas and means once found. Perhaps this is... a reaction to the avant-garde, which, in principle, is somewhat homogeneous within itself" [2, p. 122].



Illusration 1. Ekimovsky, Viktor Alekseyevich
In Wikipedia. Retrieved January 20, 2026, from
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Екимовский,_Виктор_Алексеевич

Ekimovsky's musical compositions—distinguished, on the one hand, by original poetic titles and, on the other, by neutral "numerical" designations ranging from one to one hundred—vary in their writing techniques. In some cases, the leading compositional method that defines a work's individual character is collage; in others, it is serialism, aleatoric music, micropolyphony, or sonorism. Regarding several of his compositions, Ekimovsky repeatedly employed the term "minimalism." The purpose of this article is to characterize Viktor Ekimovsky's "working methods" in pieces associated with the ideas of minimalism.

Over the past few years, the issues of minimalism in the works of Russian composers have been addressed in several publications focusing on the general characteristics of this movement in its Russian version [3; 4; 5], as well as the analysis of compositional techniques in the works of Nikolai Korndorf [6; 7] and Iraida Yusupova [8].

Among Ekimovsky's works that may be classified as minimalist, either in their entirety or in certain aspects, are the following: *Mandala* for nine performers (1983)—Composition 39; *In the Constellation of Canes Venatici* for three flutes and magnetic tape (1986)—Composition 44; *The Assumption* for percussion ensemble (1989)—Composition 52; and *Symphonic Dances* for piano and orchestra (1993)—Composition 61. This article focuses on three compositions: Nos. 52, 65, and 100. This selection is determined not only by the artistic uniqueness of the works but also by the specifics of their structural design, which allow for the identification of Ekimovsky's particular interpretation of minimalist principles.

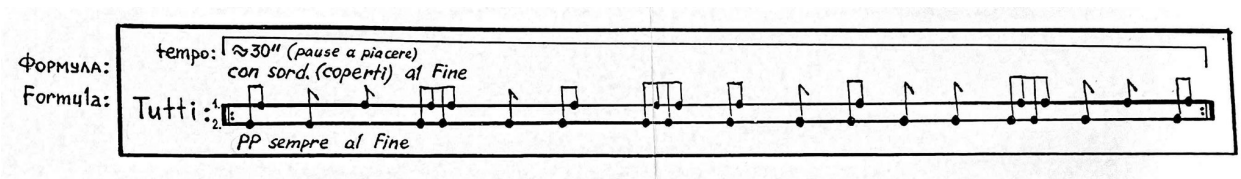
The Assumption

The Assumption (1989, Composition No. 52) is a piece for percussion ensemble,[1] written for the country's first Percussion Ensemble and dedicated to its founder and director, Mark Pekarsky (b. 1940). Ekimovsky characterized

[1] I — 2 Crotali, 2 Wood blocks, 2 Timpani (piccolo, medio—*con scordatura*);
II — 2 Triangoli, 2 Gonghi (piccolo, medio), 2 Gonghi (medio, grand);
III — 2 Temple blocks (piccoli), 2 Temple blocks (grandi), 2 Tam-tams (medio, grand);
IV — 2 Cow bells, 2 Tom-toms (piccolo, medio), 2 Tom-toms (media, grand);
V — 2 Piatti sospesi (piccolo, medio), 2 Piatti sospesi (medio, grande), 2 Timpani (medio, grande—*con scordatura*);
VI — 2 Bongos, 2 Tamburi (militare, rullante), 2 Casse (cassa, gran cassa).

the work as follows: “The composition is minimalist to the core, although it deviates significantly from the exemplary American canons of the genre—where and when have you seen, for example, *alea*minimalism?[2]” [10, p. 196]. What lies behind this unusual definition?

The entire musical texture of the work grows from a single rhythmic formula (*Example 1*), which is repeatedly reproduced in the form of a canon across the parts of the ensemble instruments.



Example 1. Viktor Ekimovsky. *The Assumption*. Rhythmic formula

The rich resources of percussion are distributed among six performers in such a way that each musician switches between three pairs of instruments throughout the piece. The minimal gradations arising within all eighteen timbre-differentiated pairs represent an important structural device. According to the author, this allows for the creation of a subtle yet significant distinction within this “most primitive two-note formula” [6, p. 197]. The indeterminacy observed in the pitch parameter—referring to the absence of a fixed intervallic relationship between the upper and lower tones—is not the only aspect indicative of aleatory. Its characteristic features are primarily concentrated in the organization of the rhythmic parameter.

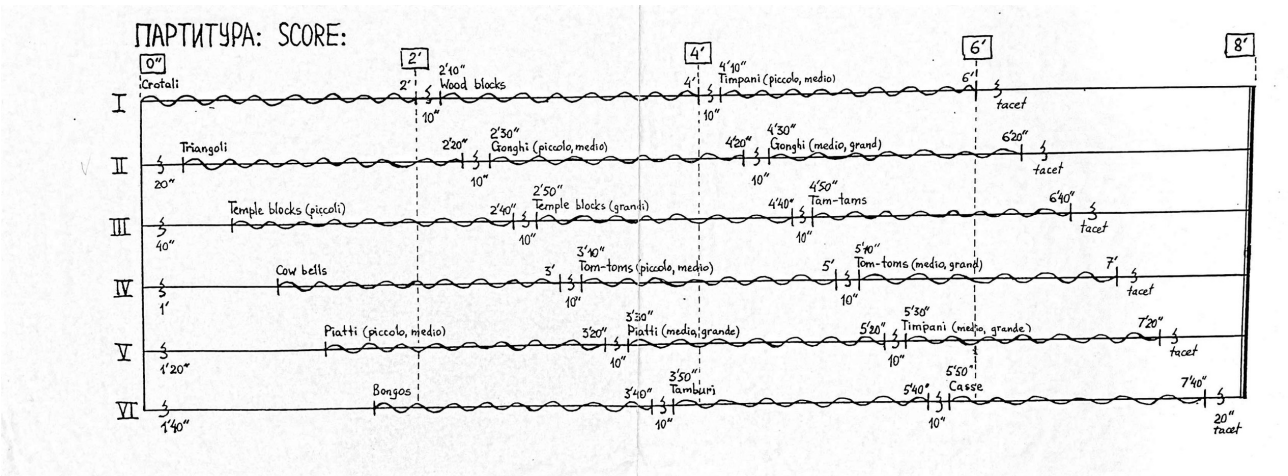
Despite the fact that all durations are unified (only eighth notes are used), the magnitude of the time intervals between them is quite approximate. The distinguishing feature depends on whether a tone is isolated or joined with one or several others. This results in four types of elements (*a*-*b*-*c*-*d*),[3] the combinations of which form the overall structure.

[2] Aleatory techniques in minimalist works, including those of American composers, are a special issue that we leave outside the scope of this article.

[3] The first element (*a*) is represented by a combination of lower and upper tones; the second (*b*) consists of the lower tone only; the third (*c*) consists of the upper tone only; and the fourth (*d*) is the first element repeated twice.

The aleatoric principle embedded in the rhythmic organization of the initial model is expressed through the uncertainty of the temporal distance between elements, which directly affects the general rhythmic profile. In this respect, *The Assumption* serves as a kind of antipode to Steve Reich's *Clapping Music* (1972). In Reich's work, a one-measure rhythmic model is metrically strict; the systematic shifting of the pattern by one eighth note, which occurs in the second part after twelve repetitions of each measure, is governed by a common pulse and requires perfectly precise synchronization between the parts.

A flexible polyphonic texture is built from the simplest elements of the formula, accompanied by a process of continuous timbral transformation. Thanks to a six-part canon (*Example 2*), the sonority systematically shifts from high registers to low registers.[4]



Example 2. Viktor Ekimovsky. *The Assumption*. Full score

[4] The gradual timbral modulation at the initial stage consists of a process of accumulation, moving from one to six timbres. The appearance of the seventh timbre entails the disappearance of the first, the eighth—the second, and so on. In this way, while maintaining its density, the musical texture constantly shifts its timbral content. The ensemble instruments enter in the following order: Crotali, Triangoli, Temple blocks (piccoli), Cow bells, Piatti sospesi (piccolo, medio), Bongos, Wood blocks, Gonghi (piccolo, medio), Temple blocks (grandi), Tom-toms (piccolo, medio), Piatti sospesi (medio, grande), Tamburi (militare, rullante), Timpani (piccolo, medio—*con scordatura*); Gonghi (medio, grand); Tam-tams (medio, grand); Tom-toms (media, grand); Timpani (medio, grande—*con scordatura*); Casse (cassa, gran cassa).

The author specifies key temporal parameters—total duration, intervals between voice entries, and pauses marking transitions to new timbral pairs—while leaving the simultaneously static and mobile rhythmic texture and diverse sonorous "constellations" unregulated.

Distinguishing the subtlest nuances within this muted palette is no easy task—the piece is instructed to be performed at an extremely quiet dynamic using instruments covered with cloth. This "ultra-quiet" music for percussion, as the author defines it, demonstrates an unusual compositional solution. The discontinuity of the musical texture and a sonority on the threshold of audibility all correspond to an elevated artistic conception. "In my view, the use of minimalist writing techniques contributes to creating an atmosphere of strict meditation", the author noted [1, p. 249].

In his *Automonography*, Ekimovsky shares his memories of a concert held on April 25, 1997, in the Rachmaninoff Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, and the atmosphere created by the musicians:

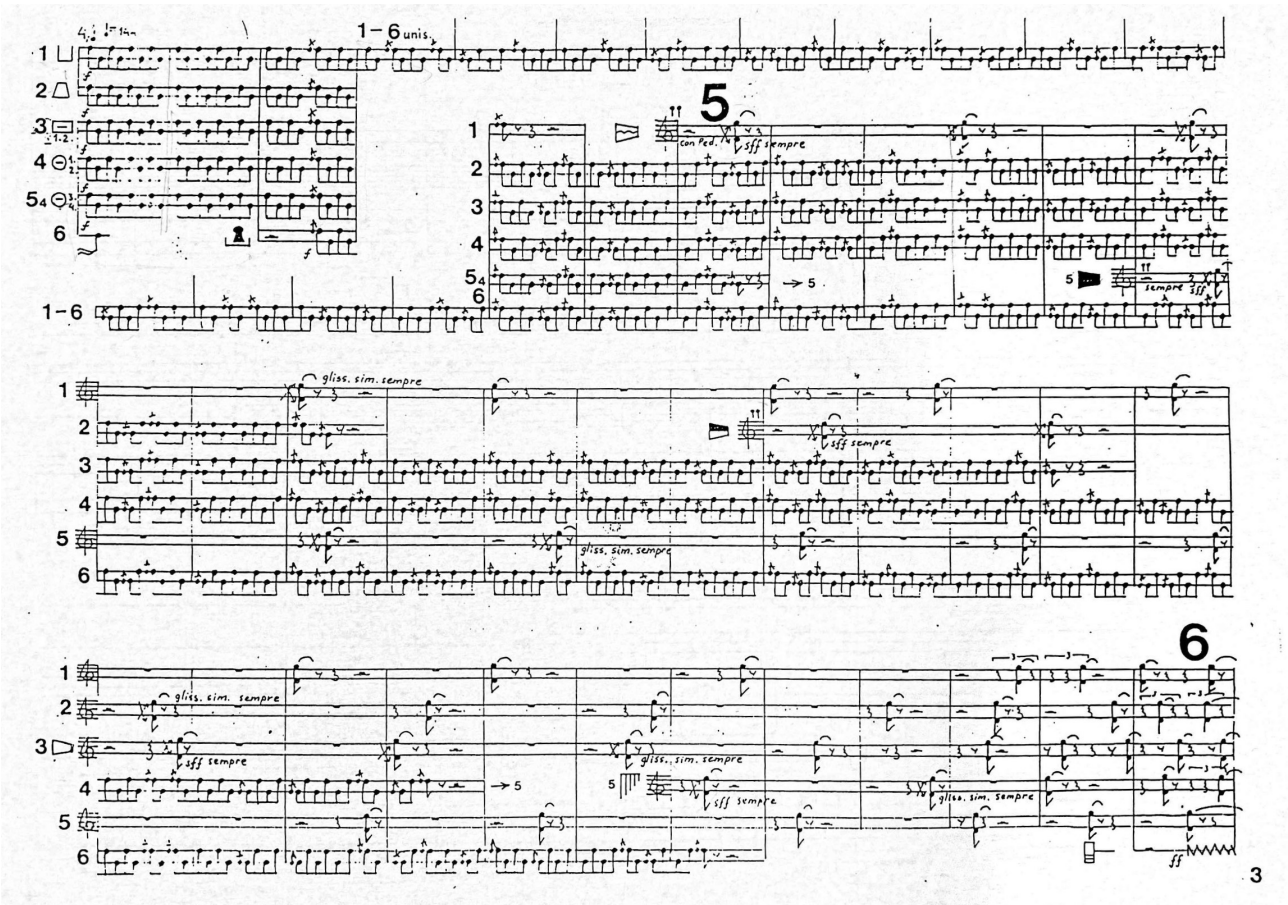
> ...That evening, absolute silence fell, and a solemn, sublime aura was established. <...> It turned out that the concert, by an unintentional and remarkable coincidence, took place on Good Friday, two days before Easter. Pekarsky, apparently sensing his communion with these legendary events, transformed *The Assumption*—perhaps on a subconscious level—into a kind of spiritual rite that defied any secular, logical explanation [11, pp. 196–197].

It should be added that *The Assumption* shares a commonality with classic minimalism (for instance, the early music of Steve Reich) through the use of phase-shifting technique. However, Ekimovsky implements this idea in a context where a stable rhythmic pulsation is entirely absent.

27 Destructions

In 1995, the composer dedicated another work to Mark Pekarsky: *27 Destructions* (Composition 65), the fifth episode of which (*Example 3*) can be called the absolute antipode to *The Assumption*. In both cases, the composer constructs the texture based on only two tones. However, while *The Assumption* is maintained at an extremely quiet dynamic throughout, this episode of *Destructions*, by contrast, is loud. *The Assumption* is characterized by a musical texture that eludes any rhythmic stability,

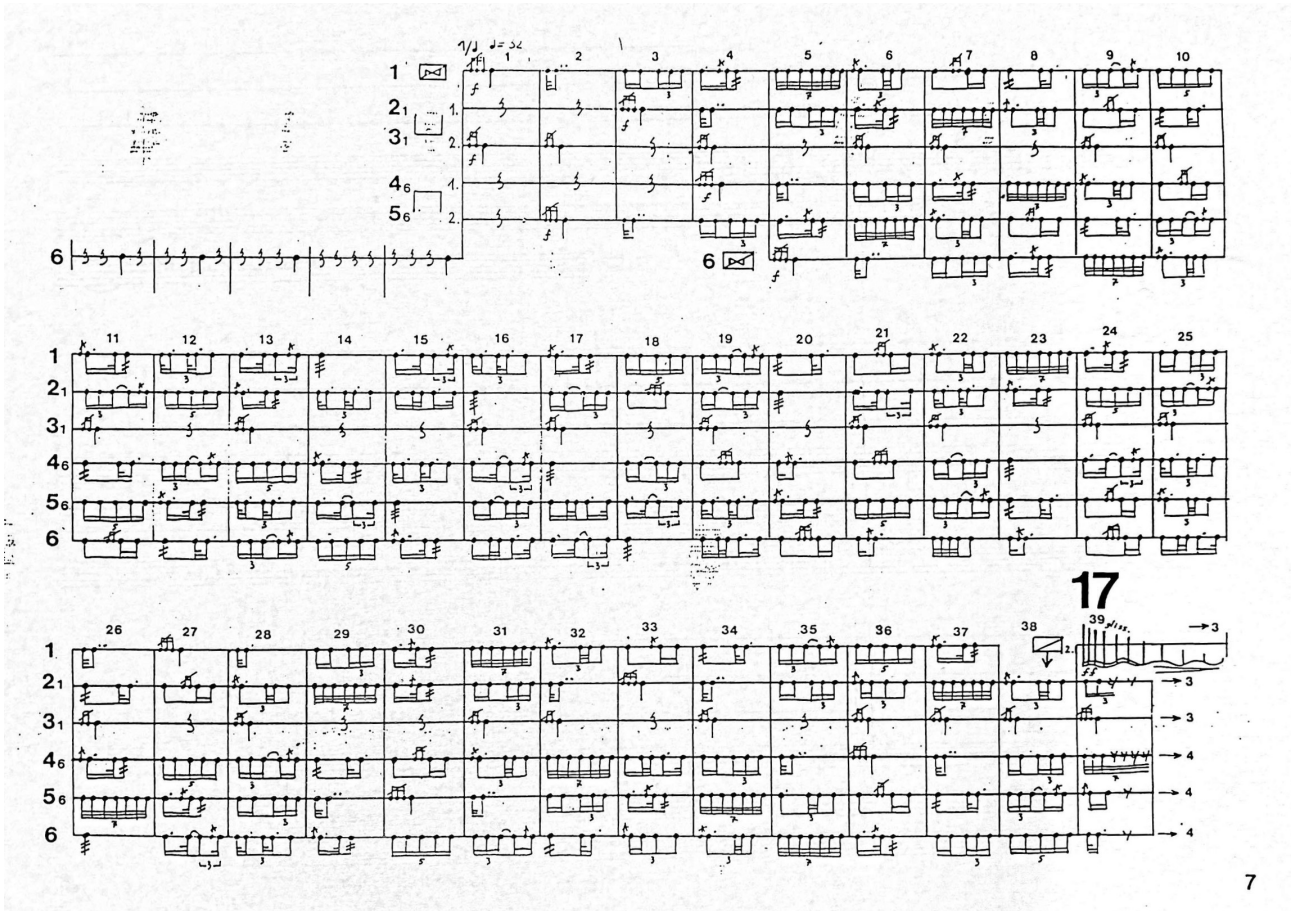
whereas in *Destructions*, it is strictly regulated; the initial image in this episode possesses an energetic character, articulated through a clear, uniform pulsation, *f* dynamics, and an ensemble *tutti*. While the texture of *The Assumption*, with its flexible aleatoric design, can be described as homogeneous, the texture of *Destructions* is multifaceted. This fragment undergoes a gradual process of deconstruction of the initial model, which constitutes the main idea of the entire composition: in each of its 27 episodes, the texture radically transforms its original appearance.



Example 3. Viktor Ekimovsky. *27 Destructions*. Episode No. 5

In this episode of *Destructions*, as in *The Assumption*, a process of timbral transformation unfolds: the textural changes occurring sequentially in each of the six parts are marked by shifts in timbre. The deconstruction of one textural model results in the construction of another: the homogeneous texture with a uniform pulsation, akin to the operation of a precise mechanism, is gradually transformed. The musical texture loses its density, giving way to individual sonorities isolated by rests; their systematic thickening reveals the reverse process—concentration.

In Episode No. 17 (*Example 4*), the idea of the phase shift is implemented purely by rhythmic means (the timbral parameter remains stable from beginning



Example 4. Viktor Ekimovsky. *27 Destructions*. Episode No. 17

to end and undergoes no transformation). The composer—just as in *The Assumption*—takes a canonical method of textural organization as a basis; however, the part of each voice contains such a sophisticated rhythmic sequence that it leads to a rapid complication of the musical texture.

The repeating formula—the pattern—consists here of a sequence of one-measure rhythmic cells. There are thirteen such unique motifs in the rhythmic structure. Once the series is exhausted, the reverse process begins: retrograde motion leads to the next statement of the pattern (this constitutes the first performer's part). In the other voices, permutations of the rhythmic cells are presented, after which the smooth retrograde or direct motion along the initial series is restored. Thus, within a concise form, the composer employs a relatively extended pattern that, like a mosaic, is constructed from thirteen non-repeating short motifs.

This episode is structured by 39 beats (bars) performed by six drums. According to the composer, these beats symbolize the lashes of a whip, referencing the Gospel events—the Passion of Christ.

Ninth Symphony "Epitaph to the Avant-Garde"

Composition No. 100—*Ninth Symphony "Epitaph to the Avant-Garde"* (2017)—is Ekimovsky's final work, premiered in November 2018 at the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall. The composition was performed by the State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia (Svetlanov Symphony Orchestra) under the direction of Vladimir Jurowski.

In an epistolary dialogue with Natalia S. Gulyanitskaya, Ekimovsky spoke of his work as follows: "...The 20th century is rich in technological innovations. But the fleeting passage of time allotted each of these innovations a certain term—and by the end of the century, all the 'newest' (as they were called in their time) techniques remained in the annals of history. The present work is a *museum exhibition* [emphasis mine.—*Yu. P.*]. <...> It all began with the 1950s avant-garde, dominated by the serialism of Boulez and Stockhausen (and in the domestic context, Denisov and Schnittke); then the aleatory of Penderecki and Lutosławski was added, followed by the minimalism of Glass and Reich. Classic avant-garde is exhausted by these main directions" [11, p. 38].

Another notable statement by Ekimovsky comes from his conversation with Rauf Farkhadov: "The last *revolutionary* invention in world compositional thought was… minimalism (1960s), which replaced the thoroughly structured and anarchically 'aleatorized' avant-garde of the 1950s" [12, p. 21].

"Epitaph to the Avant-Garde"—the only symphony in the composer's creative catalogue—is a six-movement cycle, with each movement written in a different technique. The composer placed the terminological designations corresponding to these techniques in parentheses at the beginning of each movement. Let us list these terms, or "isms," which were presumably intentionally unified by the composer in their linguistic form: serialism (Movement I), aleatorism (II), pointillism (III), micropolyphonism (IV), minimalism (V), and macrominimalism (VI).

The emphasis placed on the specifics of compositional writing—on technology as such—reflects a profound idea to which the words of Yuri M. Lotman are applicable: "…The question of art studying its own language becomes a conscious problem" [13, p. 348]. For a composer who always attached special importance to the constructive design underlying a musical composition—particularly a contemporary one—the question of how a work is made was undoubtedly of paramount importance.[5]

So, what does the fifth movement of the symphony, *Minimalism*, represent from a constructive point of view? The entire material grows from a short formula whose pitch content is reduced almost to a minimum (*Example 5*). The pattern contains only three pitches—*F*, *A*, and *Eb*—plus a repetition of *F* an octave higher. The melodic line of the pattern is nothing other than *a palindrome*, the structure of which



Example 5. Viktor Ekimovsky. *Symphony No. 9*. Beginning of Movement 5

[5] Strict constructive rules that form the basis of a composition are a characteristic feature of the creative thinking of many contemporary composers (see: [14]).

in itself programs an endless movement along an unchanging up-and-down trajectory. Another characteristic property of the pattern is its rigid tessitura within an octave range ($f^1 – f^2$), maintained by the oboe ensemble from the beginning to the end of the movement.

Since there is no stable rhythmic structure in the pattern, it would be more accurate to describe it by identifying its leading organizing principle. From a constructive point of view, this mechanism is as simple as it is effective: the uniform motion of eighth notes in an unpredictably arbitrary order is interrupted by quarter notes. In this way, an effect of constant renewal and inexhaustible rhythmic variety is achieved within a short melodic figure.

The timbral parameter is also treated minimally, within a monochromatic palette. The composer employs an ensemble of identical instruments—three oboes. The endless repetition of the melodic formula by identical instruments sounding in the same tessitura creates an image that is mesmerizing in its whimsical refinement. It is likely no mistake to assert that the primary melodic model has a pianistic origin: it is easy to imagine how it could be played on a keyboard in a single position of the right hand. The effect of immobility, created through multiple repetitions, is apparently due not only to the closed configuration of the motif but also to its "gestural" nature.

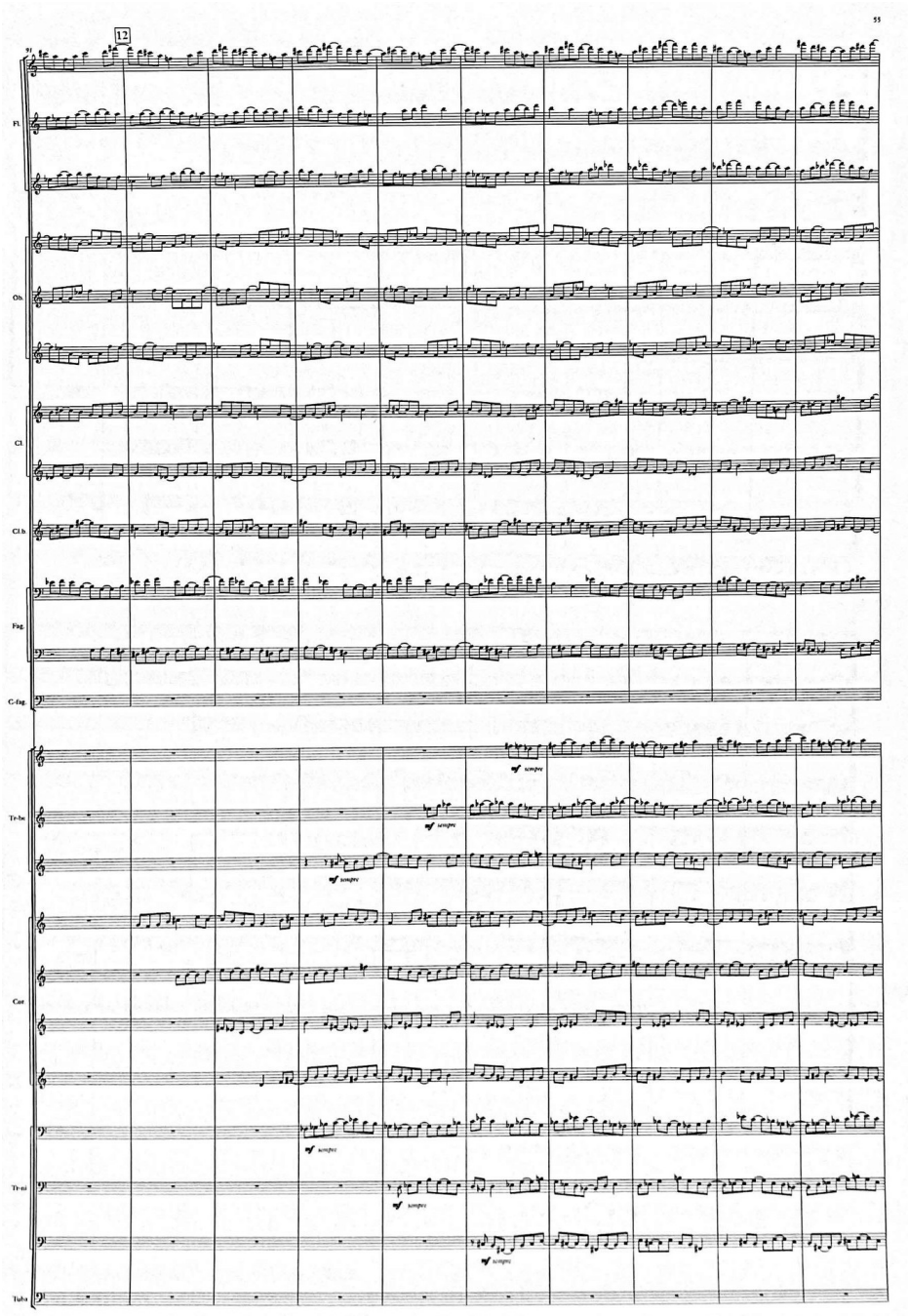
It is important to emphasize that the pattern—while continuously updated rhythmically, yet maintaining its melodic contour and original timbral appearance—remains a constant value throughout the movement. The timbral solution of the fifth movement deserves special mention, as the composer completely avoids the use of two orchestral groups: the strings and the percussion. Is this not a kind of *hommage* to Igor Stravinsky and his famous *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* in memory of Claude Debussy? The subtlety of stylistic connections in works of *hommage* and epitaph is evidenced, in particular, by a statement by Levon O. Hakobian regarding Maurice Ohana's *Tombeau de Claude Debussy*: "...a chorale... in which, if one wishes, a distant echo can be heard not so much of Debussy, but of Stravinsky's *Chorale* in memory of Debussy (1920)" [15, p. 25]. Thus, it is all the more remarkable that the texture, reminiscent of a pianistic one, is orchestrated exclusively by means of wind instruments.

Several stages can be identified in the process of the pattern's transformation, separated by brief episodes featuring only the oboe trio. With each iteration, the transformations of the pattern become increasingly intense and complex. The first stage is associated with the gradual addition of new parts and the accumulation of timbral diversity. The next stage represents a kind of large-scale super-canon, where all woodwinds (except the contrabassoon) serve as a giant proposta, while all brass (except the tuba) act as the risposta. In this macropolyphonic structure, each layer is a complex ensemble of voices which, in turn, also constitutes a canon based on the original pattern. The initial model retains its original tonal profile in only one textural layer (*Example 6*). No less remarkable is the expanding spatial geometry formed by the sequential entry of instrumental parts, which diverge from a single point and fill the space in two directions simultaneously—ascending and descending. The effect of the rapid thickening of the sound mass is facilitated by the gradual reduction, by one eighth note, of the temporal interval between voice entries within the brass group.

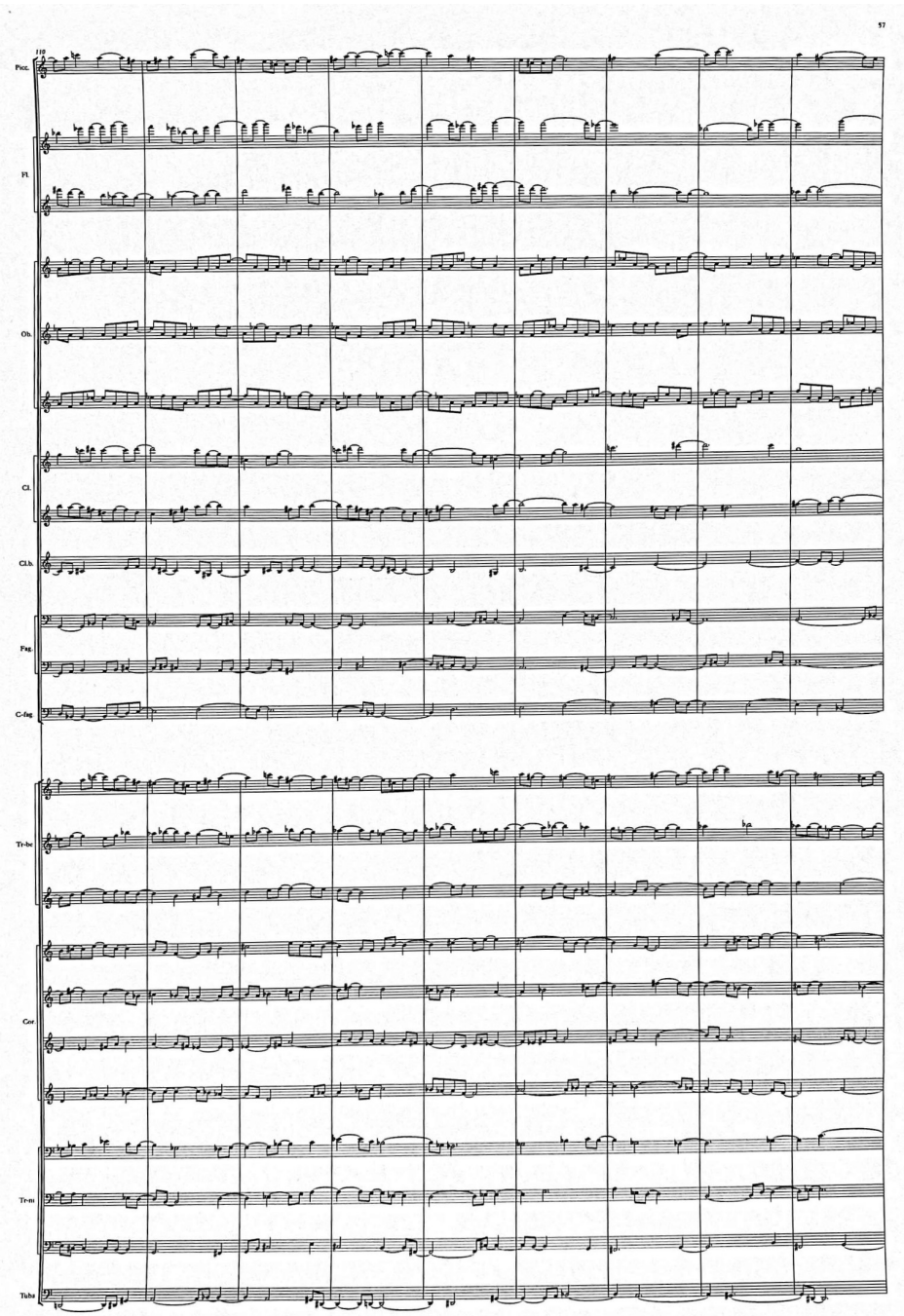
New stages of textural transformation are also marked by a specific harmonic idea: each added instrumental line affects the spatial outlines, the density of the texture, and the tonal situation. Thus, all the described changes affect only the texture and harmony; however, no rhythmic transformations occur as of yet, other than those programmed within the pattern itself.

The final, culminating stage is associated not only with the maximum expansion of the textural space and intense chromatic complication of the musical fabric but also with a departure from the already established rhythmic configuration A slowing of the rate of musical events, achieved through the non-uniform augmentation of durations, is observed in all orchestral parts except for the oboe trio (*Example 7*). This compositional technique allows one to see the vast difference emerging between the two states of the pattern at its initial and final stages of development.

The most significant and original method of development found by Ekimovsky in the fifth movement of the *Symphony* lies in the fact that all transformations of the initial model occur simultaneously with the repetition of that very same model,



Example 6. Viktor Ekimovsky. *Ninth Symphony*. Movement 5, Reh. 12



Example 7. Viktor Ekimovsky. *Ninth Symphony*. Movement 5, bars 110–118

which remains a constant value within the texture throughout the entire movement. (The instruction *repetere molto volte* over one of the final measures based on the original "oboe" material seems to absolutize the idea of endless repetition.) Parallel to this "conservative" line, another develops in the texture—one opposite to the first in its internal concept, the meaning of which is change and constant renewal.

The sixth movement of the symphony, *Macrominimalism*, justifies its title by the fact that the unit of its lengthy developmental process is not a micro-element, but a multilayered textural block. The composer reflected on the possibility of a complex unity becoming the material for a repetitive process in his article *Macrominimalism*, written following a presentation he gave at a Moscow Conservatory conference in 2004. Referencing examples from 20th-century foreign and domestic music in this article, Ekimovsky mentions the name of the Dutch composer Louis Andriessen: "As a rule, he takes not elementary structures but entire textural formations as patterns, working with them as minimal units. The result is a grand minimalism, with which one can sculpt even large-scale quasi-classical forms" [16, p. 123]. An example of using such a specific technique in Ekimovsky's own work was *Symphonic Dances* (1993), Composition 61. The finale of the *Ninth Symphony* thus became the culmination of the composer's many years of reflection on the method of macrominimalism, which began even before this method became a subject of the author's theoretical discourse.

The degree of textural complexity in the final movement of the work is impressive, as is the logic of the material's development itself. However, a complex pattern included in a repetitive process is not the only feature of this compositional technique. In the symphony's finale, Ekimovsky appears to utilize not just one pattern, as in the previous movement, but an entire multitude—twenty of them. Moreover, they initially possess a binary structure, emphasized by a highly contrasting textural design, which is clearly visible in the very graphics of the score. A sharp textural shift occurs literally every measure. The composer appears to dissect the musical fabric vertically, while maintaining the invisible logic of internal connections between adjacent multi-component blocks.

The principle of further development lies in the fact that with each repetition, the duration of the pattern changes—it compresses in volume, resulting in an even greater frequency of textural contrasts. However, at a certain stage, this method of processing the material exhausts itself, and the patterns become monolithic (one-part), losing their contrasting half. The overall texture acquires an increasingly homogeneous character and, in the final measures, becomes maximally simple: seven soaring vertical sonorities resound like columns, followed by a brief chord—like a sharp, lashing blow—that emphasizes the boundaries between all movements of the symphony.

It would perhaps be no exaggeration to say that the very idea of the "Ninth Symphony" is concentrated within this sonority. Indeed, the composer imbued it with significant intertextual potential: the D minor triad, even if complicated by a chromatic superstructure, undoubtedly alludes to such great examples of the genre as the Ninth Symphonies of Ludwig van Beethoven and Anton Bruckner (Mahler's D major Ninth Symphony, of course, may also be mentioned in this "tonal" lineage).

"With the *Ninth Symphony*, I wanted to summarize not only my own creative work but perhaps the idea of the entire avant-garde," the composer explained his concept (cited in [17]), for whom the pursuit of the "new" became a true creative *credo* and a "constant of individuality" [18]. What was new in this hundredth composition was not only the genre of the Ninth Symphony itself, which carries a specific concept, but also a series of specific compositional techniques.

In his final work, Viktor Ekimovsky paid tribute to the Great Avant-Garde (the composer capitalized these words intentionally), which gifted 20th-century music many technological innovations, including minimalism.

Conclusion

Observations of Ekimovsky's writing techniques in these three compositions allow for several conclusions. Constantly engaged in an active creative search, the composer purposefully explored the possibilities of various techniques. His artistic concepts brought a unique interpretation to them, while his theoretical thought reflected the course of the creative process in both strict and free forms of intellectual reflection.

Drawing on both the composer's own statements and the musical scores, it may be concluded that ideas characteristic of minimalism found a highly distinctive reinterpretation in Ekimovsky's works. This primarily concerns repetitivity as a method of repeating specific melodic, rhythmic, and textural structures, as well as the principle of reduction, associated with the maximal limitation of musical material.

A bold and paradoxical thinker, Ekimovsky purposefully moved toward individual compositional solutions, each time striving to establish new rules for his intellectual game. While finding reflections of American and European minimalism in his works, we simultaneously perceive an individual authorial identity that allows us to speak of "Ekimovsky's minimalism" as a phenomenon differentiated in its structural and poetic properties. Interacting with a broad cultural context—including at the level of compositional techniques—Ekimovsky's authorial style is inconceivable apart from his original and profound artistic concepts.

The composer's conceptual language includes a terminological vocabulary that reflects the author's own vision of the technological specifics of his music—aleaminimalism and macrominimalism. Filled with paradoxical resonance, these words serve as distinctive markers of a specific compositional technique that skillfully combines a profound reliance on historically established forms of organizing the musical fabric with their contemporary interpretation. Rigidity and freedom, determinism and indeterminacy, and the dialectical interaction of micro- and macrostructures—these are the features that characterize "minimalism" in Ekimovsky's music.

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The article was submitted 26.12.2025;
approved after reviewing 10.02.2026;
accepted for publication 04.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 26.12.2025;
одобрена после рецензирования 10.02.2026;
принята к публикации 04.03.2026.

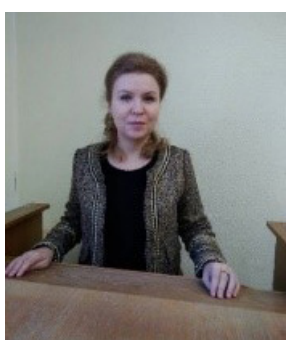
Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology
2026/10(1)
eISSN 2587-9731

Music at the Turn of the 21st Century

Original article
UDC 78.03
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-155-170
EDN XFJCGA

American musical minimalism in its interaction with mass genres

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Abstract. As long ago as its formative stage in the early 1960s, American musical minimalism revealed a close connection with the aesthetics and practices of popular genres rooted in their shared origins in the countercultural movement of the radical left youth. In subsequent decades, this tendency towards integration between the two cultural layers continued. The aim of this article is to examine

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Translated by Evgenyia E. Romanova

the mechanisms of interaction between minimalism and popular music (primarily rock culture) throughout its formation and development over more than sixty years. The main research method is comparative analysis of the studied material, including multidimensional sociocultural, historical, and stylistic analogies and parallels. Cross-cultural influences are identified at several levels: musical language (a return to expressive simplicity—diatonicism, clear metrical pulsation, and multiple repetition of material); compositional methods (repetitive techniques, sampling, delay); concert practice (performances not only in concert halls and museums, but also in nightclubs and bars); self-presentation of musicians acting as composers, performers, and, in recent decades, producers (including the creation of original ensembles combining acoustic and electronic instruments); audience and critical reception, marked by a gradual blurring of boundaries between art music and popular music; marketing strategies, such as the establishment of independent record labels and the promotion of aesthetically and stylistically similar bands and albums; and genre classification (indie classical, post-genre, post-style), reflecting the liminal character of contemporary minimalist compositional practice. The article considers three generations of musicians: 1) the founders of minimalism La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass (1960s–1970s), 2) the *Bang on a Can* collective—Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe (1990s–2000s), and 3) musicians of the millennial generation—Missy Mazzoli, Judd Greenstein, David T. Little, and Nico Muhly (2010s–early 2020s). Generational continuity is shaped by their shared New York cultural background, their reliance on minimalist techniques and repetitive processes, and, above all, the diffusion of various stylistic elements drawn from both the classical tradition and popular genres.

Keywords: American musical minimalism, repetitive technique, mass genres, rock music, indie classic

For citation: Krom, A. E. (2026). American musical minimalism in its interaction with mass genres. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 155–170. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-155-170

Современные проблемы музыкознания /
Contemporary Musicology
2026/10(1)

Музыкальное творчество рубежа XX–XXI столетий

Original article

Американский музыкальный минимализм в аспекте взаимодействия с массовыми жанрами

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Аннотация. Американский музыкальный минимализм уже на стадии своего формирования в первой половине 1960-х годов обнаружил тесную связь с эстетикой и практикой массовых жанров, что было обусловлено общими корнями, уходящими в недра леворадикального контркультурного молодежного движения. В последующие десятилетия курс на интеграцию двух пластов продолжал сохраняться. Цель исследования — проследить механизмы взаимодействия минимализма с массовой музыкой (прежде всего рок-культурой) в процессе его становления и развития, охватившего более шестидесяти лет.

В качестве основного метода исследования избран компаративистский подход к изучаемому материалу, обеспечивающий возможность многомерных социокультурных и историко-стилевых сравнений, аналогий и параллелей. Кросс-культурные влияния были установлены на разных уровнях: на уровне музыкального языка (возвращение к простоте высказывания — диатонике, ясной метрической пульсации, многократной повторности материала); методов композиции (приемы репетитивной техники, семплирование, дилей); концертной практики (рециталы не только в академических залах, музеях, но и в ночных клубах и барах); самопрезентации музыкантов, выступающих в роли композитора, исполнителя, а в последние десятилетия и продюсера (создание авторских оригинальных ансамблей, объединяющих акустические и электронные инструменты); рецепции аудитории и критики, отмечающей последовательное стирание границ между академическим и популярным искусством; маркетинговых стратегий, обусловленных организацией собственных звукозаписывающих лейблов и продвижением эстетически и стилистически близких коллективов и альбомов; жанровой классификации (инди-классик, постжанр, постстиль), отражающей пограничный характер творчества современных композиторов-минималистов. В статье представлены три поколения музыкантов: 1) основоположники движения минимализма Ла Монте Янг, Терри Райли, Стив Райх и Филип Гласс (1960–1970-е годы), 2) содружество «Стук по консервной банке» (*Bang on a Can*) — Майкл Гордон, Дэвид Лэнг, Джулия Вулф (1990–2000-е годы), 3) музыканты поколения миллениалов — Мисси Маццоли, Джадд Гринштейн, Дэвид Т. Литтл, Нико Мьюли (2010-е – начало 2020-х годов). Преемственность поколений детерминирована единой культурной почвой Нью-Йорка, а также опорой на арсенал выразительных средств минимализма и репетитивной техники, но прежде всего — диффузией всевозможных стилевых явлений, принадлежащих как академической традиции, так и массовым жанрам.

Ключевые слова: американский музыкальный минимализм, репетитивная техника, массовые жанры, рок-музыка, инди-классик

Для цитирования: *Кром А. Е.* Американский музыкальный минимализм в аспекте взаимодействия с массовыми жанрами // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 155–170. https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-155-170

Introduction

In recent years, foreign scholars have made multiple attempts to identify points of conversion between American musical minimalism—particularly its individual representatives—and popular genres. The issue has been addressed in articles [1], conference papers,[1] and monographs [2, 3, 4]. Patrick Nicholson [3] reintroduces the forgotten figures of early minimalism and considers them alongside members of non-commercial rock bands. Situating the new movement within the revolutionary context of the 1960s, he characterizes its participants as pioneers of a powerful and lasting process of the democratization of art. Kerry O'Brien and William Robin [4] emphasize minimalism's departure from art music and highlight its influence on ambient jazz, electronic music, and doom metal. Russian musicologist Anastasia Yu. Slobodchikova observes that it is sometimes difficult to draw clear boundaries between American minimalism and non-commercial post-rock [5, pp. 45–46], which reflects their active convergence. She further emphasizes that "the classics of minimalism were incorporated into the performance practice of experimental rock musicians" [6, p. 67].

Russian scholars have been actively engaged in the study of minimalism and issues related to its evolution. They examine the American repertoire, which is remains little known in Russia [7], as well as a body of European avant-garde works in which certain minimalist techniques can be identified [8]. However, their main focus lies on the Russian composers—Alexander I. Rabinovich-Barakovsky [9], Nikolai S. Korndorf [10], Anton A. Batagov [11]—particularly on their approaches to repetitive process. Russian musicologists address the dialogue between American minimalism and popular genres through the works of earlier composers [12; 13; 14; 15]. At the same time, the genesis and stylistic evolution of this interaction between two cultural spheres, art music and popular music, still requires scholarly attention and systematic analysis.

[1] *Berryhill A., Waltz S.* David Bowie and Philip Glass at the Intersection of Minimalism and Rock. The project is implemented in Don and Karen DeRosa University Center (DUC) April 27, 2024. Research & Creativity Showcase, 2024.

The present article seeks to trace the characteristics of these cross-cultural intersections at multiple levels: musical language and compositional techniques, concert practice, modes of self-presentation, marketing strategies and genre classification, as well as reception by critics and audiences.

The Founders of Minimalism in Dialogue with Popular Genres

One of the defining features of American musical minimalism is its genetic kinship with popular genres, particularly rock culture. The formation and consolidation of new artistic movement unfolded during the turbulent era of the 1960s and reflected its rebellious spirit. The history of the intense interaction and mutual influence between minimalism and rock music in the United States has already been examined in Russian research literature. In particular, the diffusion between art music and popular music has been described as a process that "leveled the long-standing hierarchical system dividing genres into high and low, elite and democratic" [16, p. 88].

The nature of the concert presentation of the works by the founders of minimalism brought them closer to popular genres in many respects: the choice of unconventional performance venues (rock clubs and art galleries), the formation of composer-led ensembles to perform their own compositions (La Monte Young's *Theatre of Eternal Music, Steve Reich and Musicians,* the *Philip Glass Ensemble*), the use of electric instruments and amplification. Extended compositions were structured around repetitive processes.

Minimalist projects were especially welcome in the experimental art world—among the artists and sculptors of Minimal Art (Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra). Thus, minimalist music was aimed "both at an intellectual audience that 'read' the subtle and inventive work with the repetitive process, and at a wider audience that immersed itself in a psychedelic trance under the influence of the endless ostinato of the simplest patterns" [14, p. 11].

The classics of minimalism continued to follow their chosen path. Philip Glass composes operas and symphonies, but his music is also featured in Hollywood

films and video games.[2] In *Radio Rewrite* (2012) for instrumental ensemble, Steve Reich draws on material from two songs by the rock band *Radiohead*: the first, third, and fifth movements are based on *Jigsaw Falling into Place*, while the second and fourth on *Everything in its Right Place*.[3] Repetitive processes, including gradual phase shifting (developed by Reich), delay experiments first tried by Terry Riley, and sampling have become integral components of the contemporary musical vocabulary.

Bang on a Can and the Millennial Generation

The founders of the style paved the way for the next generation of American composers. David Lang, Michael Gordon, and Julia Wolfe formed the *Bang on a Can*[4] collective in 1987. Above all, the influence of Reich and Glass manifested itself in a new strategy of interaction between art music and popular culture. Like the leading figures of minimalism, Gordon developed a keen interest in rock music, which led to the creation of the *Michael Gordon Philharmonic*.[5]

At the beginning of his career, Gordon made extensive use of microphones and amplification, finding appreciative audiences in nightclub venues. Although he moved away from rock stylistics in the 2000s, his 1990s compositions display clear connections to the genre, as evidenced by the timbre of the electric guitar, amplifiers, emphasized backbeat, and prevailing repetitive principles in the construction of musical material.

Lang's music demonstrates an even greater degree of convergence between art music and popular culture. He broadens his range of stylistic references, at times drawing from the traditions of Broadway musical theater (for example, Crouch's aria from the opera *Anatomy Theater*), and at others evoking the sound world of post-rock, as in the vocal cycle *Death Speaks*.

[2] Thus, *Pruit Igoe* from Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi* is featured on the soundtrack of the video game *Grand Theft Auto 4*, where it is broadcast on the in-game radio station Journey. The video game *Chime* incorporates Glass's composition *Brazil*. Philip Glass also composed the original soundtrack for the strategy game *Old World* (2020, Windows). See The Journey, Videogame Soundtracks Wiki. (n.d.). *Fandom*. Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://vgost.fandom.com/wiki/Grand_Theft_Auto_IV#The_Journey

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In 1992, the composers founded their own ensemble, *Bang on a Can All-Stars*, which performed both classical minimalist works (Reich, Glass, Meredith Monk) and collaborations with DJs popular in nightclubs [2]. Its instrumentation, combining acoustic and electronic resources (cello, double bass, piano, percussion, electric guitar, clarinet) became a model for a generation of millennial minimalist composers born in the late 1970s and early 1990s. Numerous ensembles were established by the composers themselves: David Little's *Newspeak*[6] (female vocals, clarinet, violin, guitar, cello, piano, percussion, drums), *NOW Ensemble*[7] by Judd Greenstein and Patrick Burke (double bass, electric guitar, clarinet, piano, flute), *Victoire*[8] (French for "victory"), created by Missy Mazzoli (violin, clarinet, piano, double bass, electric bass guitar, soprano). The unconventional instrumentation and reliance on amplification reflect the hybrid character of this music, which integrates elements of the classical tradition with features of rock culture. The geography of their performances is broad, as is typical of minimalists: from Carnegie Hall to the art club (*Le*) *Poisson Rouge* in New York's bohemian Greenwich Village, and from major festivals (*Ecstatic Music Festival*[9] and *Bang on a Can*) to bowling alleys.

The terminology itself is deliberately subjected to cross-stylistic blurring. Missy Mazzoli describes her sextet as a "bandsemble" ((rock) band + (chamber) ensemble). In this group, each performer plays their own part, and the repertoire consists of works by a single composer, who also serves as organizer and performer.

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[6] Official website of the ensemble Newspeak. *Newspeak* (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://newspeakmusic.org/audio/

[7] Official website of the ensemble NOW Ensemble. *NOW Ensemble*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.nowensemble.com/

[8] Official website of the ensemble Victoire. *Victoire*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.victoiremusic.com/

[9] Ecstatic Music Festival. (n.d.). *Concert Archives*. Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.concertarchives.org/bands/ecstatic-music-festival; Ecstatic Music Festival (n.d.). New Amsterdam Records. Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.newamrecords.org/projects/ecstatic-music-festival

At the same time, guitarists and percussionists from rock bands (such as Bryce Dessner of *The National*[10]) are invited to collaborat.[11]

For composers of Mazzoli's generation, the crossover experience appears to be the only possible condition for artistic development: "From a young age, … I played guitar in a series of terrible punk bands, practiced my Beethoven daily, and wrote volumes of melodramatic music that I didn't share with anyone."[12] Electroacoustic ensembles with a symbiotic genre repertoires designed to appeal to diverse audiences, and performing in concert halls and bars, align with the tendency toward the erosion of hierarchical boundaries initiated by the classics of minimalism. On the one hand, "music that freely crosses stylistic boundaries is in demand by versatile audiences, regardless of gender, age, and social status"; on the other hand, "a new 'mixed' audience is creating demand for precisely such synthetic phenomena" [14, p. 9].

At the same time, composers who experiment across multiple cultural niches and have insider knowledge of mass culture are highly qualified graduates of prestigious American universities, including members of the Ivy League. A strong academic background shapes a certain perspective, a system of views on a fusion of genres. As composer Zoë Keating observes, "a lot of classically trained musicians … who played classical music but did not listen to classical music. They don't see the genre boundaries the same way as an older generation does."[13]

Some minimalist composers have established independent record labels to promote their own work. In 2001, the members of *Bang on a Can* founded *Cantaloupe Music*,[14] through which they release their compositions and support young

[10] Official website of the ensemble The National. *The National*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.americanmary.com/

[11] For example, *Cathedral City* is the debut album of the bandsemble *Victoire*. The recording includes eight compositions by Missy Mazzoli, along with guest appearances by performers and composers such as Bryce Dessner of *The National*, Florent Ghys, William Brittelle, and Melissa Hughes.

[12] Heidrick, E. R. (2020). *Bandsembles and Bandsembling: The History and the Experience* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Doctor of Music)]. Florida State University, p. 2.

[13] Welch, K. (2016). *Performing with a post-genre ethos. A performance-led exploration of post-genre and indie classical music* [Unpublished master's thesis]. The University of Queensland, p. 1.

[14] Official website of Cantaloupe Music. *Cantaloupe Music*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://cantaloupemusic.com/

emerging composers. In an effort to discover new talent, Lang, Gordon, and Wolfe have organized contemporary music festivals for over 20 years. The first summer gathering in 2002 brought together composers Judd Greenstein, Missy Mazzoli, Matt McBain, and Mark Dancigers [17, p. 57–58], who later co-founded one of the most prominent American independent labels, *New Amsterdam Records*.[15] The label provided artists with an online platform, financial support for the production and distribution of CDs, touring assistance, and professional services, including a public relations, design, and sound engineering. The marketing campaign was led by Steven Swartz, who studied composition with Morton Feldman at the University at Buffalo and worked for sixteen years as advertising director at *Boosey & Hawkes*. During the 2000s, the project's participants mainly focused on popular music, particularly indie rock, rather than the traditional classical repertoire.

In 2010, Missy Mazzoli's bandsemble released their debut album *Cathedral City*[16] on the New Amsterdam label. The recording received high critical acclaim in press[17] and sparked a discussion about genre classification. Mazzoli observed: "Some critics have claimed my recent album Cathedral City is not classical music, even though it is fully notated, uses several instruments straight out of the orchestra, harmonies straight out of Stravinsky and was written by a composer straight out of music school."[18]

As Alex Ross has aptly noted, since the 2000s, "the cross-pollination between styles has become so commonplace that most attempts at categorization are futile."[19] In 2007, New Amsterdam Records proclaimed a bold mission: "To provide a haven

[15] Official website of New Amsterdam Records. *New Amsterdam Records*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://www.newamrecords.org/

[16] Mazzoli, M. (n.d.). Cathedral City. *Missy Mazzoli, composer*. Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://missymazzoli.com/recordings/cathedral-city/

[17] *Time Out New York*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times* named *Cathedral City* one of the best albums of 2010.

[18] As cited in Heidrick, E. R. (2020). *Bandsembles and Bandsembling: The History and the Experience* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Dr of Music)]. Florida State University, p. 5–6.

[19] As cited in Heidrick, 2020 p. 6.

for the young New York composers whose music slips through the cracks between genres" [17, p. 55]. Their slogan reads: "Music without walls, from a scene without a name" [17, p. 55].

Meanwhile, at the turn of the 2010s, Judd Greenstein began referring to New Amsterdam's repertoire as *indie classical* (derived from "independent classical," by analogy with the widely used term indie rock). The term was soon adopted by many musicians—Missy Mazzoli, Matt McBain, Nadia Sirota, and Nico Muhly, who, in turn, founded the record label *Bedroom Community*.[20] The necessity of positioning their own labels within a market environment encouraged the search for adequate advertising strategies and recalled earlier classification practices used by the popular American weekly *Billboard*. In the 1950s, the magazine applied the term "indie classical" to several small companies releasing recordings of art music. Decades later, the word re-emerged with a broader meaning. In 2010, Grinshtein explained: "the term 'indie[-]classical' ... contains a horizontal and vertical component—the 'vertical' axis of our connection to the classical tradition, and the 'horizontal' axis of our connection to other independent musics."[21]

However, by the mid-2010s, the authors had abandoned this definition. Mazzoli noted:

> It's so easy to create an idea of what my music is based on its labels: classical, indieclassical, post-minimal, contemporary, chamber-pop, opera, orchestral, etc. None of these words really tells you anything about how the music sounds or how you will feel about it, and they actually get in the way. I spend half my time explaining why the work "is" or "is not" classical, why I'm a "composer" versus a "musician," or how I feel about the term "indie". There's no real answer to those questions.[22]

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[20] Official website of Bedroom Community. *Bedroom Community*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2026, from https://bedroomcommunity.net/

[21] As cited in Heidrick, E. R. (2020). *Bandsembles and Bandsembling: The History and the Experience* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Dr of Music)]. Florida State University, p. 8.

[22] As cited in Heidrick, E. R. (2020). *Bandsembles and Bandsembling: The History and the Experience* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Dr of Music)]. Florida State University, p. 10.

William Brittelle, David T. Little, and Missy Mazzoli generally employ the term *post-genre*[23], John Adams readily uses *post-style* [18, p. 540], a concept rooted in postmodern pluralism and the blending of diverse musical elements.

The transition of art into a post- or metamodern culture had become evident as early as the final quarter of the twentieth century and was recognized by scholars in various national traditions. American millennial composers fit into the current space through the synthesis of diverse phenomena: the Western art music tradition (from medieval polyphony to the avant-garde and metamodernism), electronic music, folk, indie rock, and pop, as well as repetitive processes such as Glass's linear addition/subtraction and Reich's phase shifting and rhythmic constructions.

Summary

Generational continuity among minimalist composers has mostly been shaped by the shared cultural environment of New York, which fostered their artistic quest. The topographical map of the city reveals a division between the prestigious uptown with the cultivation of high art music in legendary concert halls, and the bohemian downtown with its alternative music of nightclubs and bars. Let us recall that the genealogical tree of minimalism took root in the artistic districts of Lower Manhattan—Soho and Greenwich Village—the cradle of the experimental currents of American art.

Minimalist composers not only organically merged into the broader cultural movement toward the erosion of traditional genre boundaries and hierarchical distinctions, but also acted as its initiators and advocates in many ways. Their compositional strategies, inspired by the successful symbiosis of diverse stylistic sources grounded in repetitive processes, allowed them to create a universal language attracting artists from all over the world into its orbit of influence.

[23] Welch, K. (2016). *Performing with a post-genre ethos. A performance-led exploration of post-genre and indie classical music* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Queensland, p. 13.

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The article was submitted 15.01.2026; approved after reviewing 11.02.2026; accepted for publication 04.03.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 15.01.2026; одобрена после рецензирования 11.02.2026; принята к публикации 04.03.2026.

Современные проблемы музыкознания / Contemporary Musicology

2026/10(1)

eISSN 2587-9731

Performing Arts

Original article
UDC 786, 78.071.2
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-171-203
EDN YFBIPU

The influence of sociocultural dynamics on contemporary Chinese piano performance and repertoire





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Abstract. Contemporary piano performance in China has developed within a complex sociocultural environment shaped by both traditional Chinese musical heritage and Western classical traditions. This study investigates how sociocultural dynamics influence the performance practices, repertoire choices,

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and creative interpretations of contemporary Chinese pianists. Using a qualitative research design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve professional Chinese piano performers with diverse levels of experience. The interview data were analysed through thematic analysis, which resulted in six key themes reflecting the role of social environment, cultural literacy, traditional Chinese aesthetics, Western musical influence, performance strategies, and sociocultural challenges encountered by pianists. The findings reveal that sociocultural contexts strongly shape piano performance by influencing musicians' interpretive approaches, emotional expression, and repertoire development. Participants emphasized that Chinese cultural traditions such as folk melodies, pentatonic scales, operatic elements, and the concept of artistic imagery remain deeply embedded in contemporary piano performance. At the same time, Western classical traditions continue to dominate formal training and repertoire, requiring performers to develop an understanding of Western historical and stylistic contexts. While existing literature often portrays Chinese musical culture as restrictive toward creativity, the perspectives of professional pianists in this study challenge that assumption by highlighting a dynamic process of cultural fusion and artistic innovation. However, participants also identified challenges such as limited access to Western musicological resources and difficulties interpreting Western stylistic conventions. Overall, the findings demonstrate that contemporary Chinese piano performance is not merely a replication of Western traditions but a transcultural artistic practice shaped by the interaction of Chinese heritage, global musical influences, and evolving sociocultural environments.

Keywords: piano performance in China, sociocultural environment, Chinese musical culture, Western stylistic conventions, performance, composition, innovation, music, professional

For citation: Cai, L., & Liu, J. (2026). The influence of sociocultural dynamics on contemporary Chinese piano performance and repertoire. *Contemporary Musicology, 10*(1), 171–203.
https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-171-203

Современные проблемы музыкознания /
Contemporary Musicology
2026/10(1)

Исполнительское искусство

Научная статья

Влияние социокультурных факторов на современное китайское фортепианное исполнительство и репертуар

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Аннотация. Современное фортепианное исполнительство в Китае развивалось в сложной социокультурной среде, сформированной как традиционным китайским музыкальным наследием, так и западными классическими традициями. В статье рассмотрено, как социокультурная динамика влияет на исполнительскую практику, выбор репертуара и творческие интерпретации современных китайских пианистов. Используя качественный исследовательский подход, авторы провели частично структурированные интервью с двенадцатью китайскими пианистами-профессионалами, обладающими различным уровнем опыта. Данные интервью проанализированы с помощью тематического анализа, в результате которого были выделены шесть ключевых тем, отражающих роль социальной среды, культурной грамотности, традиционной китайской эстетики, западного

музыкального влияния, исполнительских стратегий и социокультурных проблем, с которыми сталкиваются пианисты. Результаты показывают, что социокультурный контекст сильно влияет на фортепианное исполнение, воздействуя на интерпретационные подходы музыкантов, эмоциональное выражение и развитие репертуара. Участники подчеркнули, что китайские культурные традиции, такие как народные мелодии, пентатонные гаммы, оперные элементы и концепция художественной образности, остаются глубоко укорененными в современном фортепианном исполнительстве. В то же время западные классические традиции продолжают доминировать в формальном обучении и репертуаре, требуя от исполнителей понимания западного исторического и стилистического контекста. Хотя существующая литература часто изображает китайскую музыкальную культуру как ограничивающую творчество, взгляды профессиональных пианистов в данном исследовании оспаривают это предположение, подчеркивая динамичный процесс культурного слияния и художественных инноваций. Однако участники также указали на такие проблемы, как ограниченный доступ к западным музыковедческим ресурсам и трудности в интерпретации западных стилистических норм. В целом результаты показывают, что современное китайское фортепианное исполнение — это не просто воспроизведение западных традиций, а транскультурная художественная практика, формируемая взаимодействием китайского наследия, глобальных музыкальных влияний и развивающейся социокультурной среды.

Ключевые слова: фортепианное исполнительство в Китае, социокультурная среда, китайская музыкальная культура, западные стилистические нормы, исполнение, композиция, инновации, музыка, профессионализм

Для цитирования: Цай Л., Лю Ц. Влияние социокультурных факторов на современное китайское фортепианное исполнительство и репертуар // Современные проблемы музыкознания. 2026. Т. 10, № 1. С. 171–203. (На англ. яз.). https://doi.org/10.56620/2587-9731-2026-1-171-203

1. Introduction

Music is not only a product of personal skill and performance, but also a product of cultural and social development. For instance, social comparison between performers can influence the development of self-efficacy and motivation in an artist. Artists or music performers receiving direct feedback concerning their performance are likely to experience self-efficacy and reap creativity during music composition and performance, as compared to artists or music learners whose efficacy has been compared socially with others (Asmus, 2021; Granot et al., 2021). The influential role of social development or social dynamics in music composition and performance has further gained importance with the rising role of social media in promoting music education. This has been observed in recent qualitative studies reporting how social media or a supportive social environment facilitated knowledge sharing, face-to-face instruction, communication, arousal of learning interest, and improvement of instrument playing skills such as rhythm, fingering, and posture (Lei et al., 2021; Ng et al., 2022). Similarly, participatory and social-interactive aspects are also essential determinants of music performance composition. Indeed, live music performances and concerts afford verbal interactions between the audience and the artists, where the former provides direct reactions like attention, interest, support, displeasure, and pleasure to the latter. Such interactions give artists the necessary feedback to propagate or limit specific music compositions and pieces (Wald-Furhmann et al., 2021; Picaud, 2022). In another interesting example, it is considered culturally unusual for African musicians to number the beats in their music composition and performance—a cultural practice that is an essential prerequisite for classical Indian musicians (Clayton et al., 2020). Thus, the importance of cultural and social developments in influencing music performance, composition, and continuous learning is crucial and undeniable.

While the relationship between sociocultural dynamics and music composition and performance has been established in evidence-based literature, there is a lack of focus on piano performance, particularly the composition of Chinese piano artists. The paper by Zheng and Leung (2021) which investigated multiple case studies of Chinese piano learning students, found that traditional Chinese culture limits expressive autonomy in the composition and piano performance of budding artists. This is because traditional Chinese classical music is based completely on standardised notations. This means that the tempi, dynamics, and intentions

of the piano artists must be as accurate and faithful to these standardised cultural notations. This limits creativity since performers are restricted to only reproducing traditional Chinese works, rather than deviating and creating any original piano compositions (Zheng & Leung, 2021). Another similar qualitative study by Zheng and Leung (2023), which interviewed Chinese piano professors and artists from Guangzhou and Shanghai found that creativity in piano composition and performance is perceived differently between Chinese and Western cultures. Chinese perspectives of musical creativity are established with the need to respect the past and maintain harmony with nature. In contrast, Western cultures encourage artists to practice creativity by providing unique compositions and solutions within suitable contexts (Zheng & Leung, 2023). However, these studies have focused primarily on the aspect of creativity in music, without emphasising or exploring how the composition, playing styles, and performances of Chinese professional piano artists are influenced by social and traditional cultural factors. Comparing these experiences, with the perspectives held by Chinese piano artists on the contrasting impact of Western cultures in their composition, styles, and performances, can provide profound insights into the sociocultural dynamics underlying the Chinese piano industry. This study thus intends to overcome the identified problem of limited research by exploring how nuances of social and cultural developments, both within and beyond China, have influenced the piano compositions and performances of professional piano artists respectively.

The rationale of this study lies in its ability to provide detailed insights concerning the current status of piano performance and musical composition in China, in light of historical and contemporary sociocultural development. After the introduction of the piano during the seventeenth century in China, several musical pieces have been composed specifically in the country for the new instrument. Despite Chinese piano music being performed popularly in the country, Chinese piano compositions continued to be perceived as foreign to the standard repertoire followed in the West. Despite a willingness between both cultures to learn about each other, there is often a lack of appreciation and understanding of the cultural differences between Chinese and Western piano performances (Tu, 2019; Li, 2021). However, research exploring the experiences or attitudes held by Chinese piano artists. This study is thus rationalised for investigating the perspectives held by Chinese piano artists regarding the influence of sociocultural factors in their

piano performances and composition. Its findings can have useful implications for identifying potential areas of establishing cultural harmony between Oriental and Western music philosophies. Additionally, during the Opium War in the 1840s, piano was disseminated in China by foreign missionaries, which bolstered the establishment of small Western instrumental stores in Chinese coastal cities. Since these historical developments, Chinese pianists have continued to explore the piano with traditional Chinese playing styles. The earliest cultural version of Chinese piano composition is regarded to be the product of Western and Chinese music (Tu, 2019; Cheng, 2021; Bai, 2021). These findings thus contradict existing literature, which shows that Chinese musical cultures are rigid with limited space for creativity. It is therefore reasonable to further explore the perspectives of Chinese piano artists on this cultural fusion, as this will reveal how Chinese piano music serves as a product of historical and sociocultural changes.

1.1. Aims and Objectives

This study aims to investigate the influence of sociocultural dynamics on contemporary Chinese piano performance. It seeks to achieve the following research objectives:

1. To explore the views of Chinese professional piano artists on the impact of sociocultural factors on their performance.

2. To evaluate the views of Chinese professional piano artists on the impact of traditional Chinese social and cultural factors on piano composition, performance and innovation.

3. To assess, from the perspective of Chinese professional piano artists, the impact of comparative differences between Chinese and Western traditional cultures on piano composition, performance, and innovation.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sociocultural Influences on Music and Piano Performance

Existing research supports the significant influence of social and cultural factors on music performance. For example, according to Lerch et al. (2019), every musical performance relies on the meaningful interpretation and feedback provided by the listener. The perspectives and responses of the listeners towards musical performance, are not merely dependent on external performance features, but also on internal characteristics, such as their levels of training, personal history, and

cultural background. Listener-focused performance analysis is thus driven by social and cultural aspects of perception, which prompt artists to deliver relevant musical output in their compositions (Lerch et al., 2019). Further, according to Pearce (2018), the syntactical structure of various musical genres and styles varies across diverse musical cultures. Such a structure is learned through cultural exposure which produces observed distinctive features between listeners from various cultures. For this reason, the extent to which the music of any two cultures will be different in the context of rhythm, and pitch, will predict how an individual from one culture will process music from another culture (Pearce, 2018). This means that the cultural differences in musical features such as pitch, rhythm, and tempo between Chinese and Western cultures, influence differences in their piano performances and compositions.

However, research focused on piano performance appears to be scarce. For example, Gorbunova and Hiner (2019) investigated the problems associated with mastering electronic musical instruments, such as the electronic piano, and the role of culture in its performance mastery. The performance of electronic piano instruments requires a combination of the cultural traditions of the performer towards individual acoustic instruments, as well as a creative perspective toward the development, regulation, and management of new or existing timbres. Traditional musical cultures also contribute to the understanding that a musical instrument such as a piano, is a specific physical object that can only be used to generate specific sounds and timbre. However, musical cultures become innovative in the context of electronic versions of traditional instruments and subsequently, prompts the development of a modified piano with multiple keyboards and features to incorporate a multitude of unique sounds (Gorbunova, 2018; Gorbunova & Hiner, 2019). In another study by Lavengood (2019), Western genres known as the ‘80s sound’ emerged, and continue to be attractive, because of cultures related to musical timbre that were popularised by electronic pianos such as the digital synthesiser during that time. Additionally, the 1980s were also characterised by culture-shifting opinions. This was seen in the form of a preference towards creating music that was fresh, loud, ambitious and representative of diverse cultures. As a result, a fusion of genres, such as music that combined rock and rap music emerged. Further, because of the rise of television, and music channels such as MTV that broadcasted music videos and live artist performances, such music also made its way to the suburbs and remote areas. The appreciation and dissemination of a more creative musical culture were

further increased by the development of digital technologies, such as the electronic guitar, synthesiser and electronic drum kits, which began to be widely used in recording studios (Lavengood, 2019). While these findings are historical — and limited in the context of the piano — they demonstrate the importance of culture in defining the perspectives of piano performance and music creation. It is thus evident that social and cultural factors play a significant role in influencing music, in particular, contemporary piano performance.

2.2. Impact of Chinese Culture on Music and Piano Performance

Pianoization refers to the adaptation of melodies originally written for traditional instruments — such as erhu, pipa, guzheng, or Beijing opera vocal lines — into pianistic idioms while preserving their timbral and expressive essence. Composers such as Wang Jianzhong (*Variations on a Theme of the Yellow River*) and Chu Wanghua frequently used Pianoization to imitate sliding tones, ornamentation, and modal inflections characteristic of Chinese folk traditions.

While the piano was introduced by Western culture, the Chinese piano music follows a unique style that reflects the 5000-year-old tradition of the country. The overall culture of China incorporates the diverse heritages of its various ethnic groups. For this reason, piano culture in China is unique and adapted to the distinctive artistic features and characteristics of its local cultures (Ye, 2020; Lu, 2022). Therefore, it is clear that the influence of traditional Chinese culture on piano performance is multifaceted and heterogeneous, retaining regional and local characteristics. Indeed, Liu (2022) notes that Chinese piano music is based on folk songs and Chinese traditional poetry, which reflect the characteristic features of refined intonation and expressive sounds in this genre of music. Chinese music has historically been revolutionised by the composer Chu Wanghua, especially with his piano suite composition *Sounds of the Temple* (*Capriccio Suite: The Sound of the Linyin Temple*). This traditional piano piece incorporates the sounds of bells, a slow tempo, major deviations in tone, and the use of polyphonic sounds to imitate other Chinese musical instruments (Liu, 2022). Similarly, Jinjin and Isaiah (2021) postulate that this cultural tradition of harmonizing classical piano music with the works of other instruments is a traditional Chinese music practice known as transplantation or ‘pianoization.’ It comprises retaining the structure and melody of the original piano work while also combining traditional instrumental music

– a practice used prevalently by Chinese composers during the 1980s (Jinjin & Isaiah, 2021). The cross-sectional paper by Lu (2022) further cements these findings by arguing that, while traditional Chinese music is based on a single sound and a historical heritage stretching across several thousand years, Chinese piano music is peculiar since it was introduced by Western traditions. Thus, while Chinese piano music maintains a Westernised harmony, its artistic aesthetics are modified to suit traditional Chinese folk instruments (Lu, 2022). Such modifications establish a platform where piano performance and composition in China are influenced by both Chinese and Western traditional cultures.

2.3. Western vs. Chinese Cultures in Music and Piano Performance

In the field of piano education, diverse cultural traditions bring forth diverse meanings and modifications in the music. For example, within the humanistic tradition of Britain, piano players are encouraged to develop their talents and pianist skills according to their individual strengths. In the United States, however, there is a comparatively weaker emphasis on a classical tradition and music performers are mainly encouraged to play based on personal values and practicality. In contrast, Chinese culture is based on traditional humanistic ideas and thus encourages piano players to cultivate moral values in their performance through education (Ye, 2020; Zhang & Negus, 2020). Such diversity in tradition and culture, however, does not mean that Chinese piano performance or music in general has been completely free from Western influence. For instance, in his book, Wong (2020) notes that since the last century, traditional Chinese music has experienced a process of modernization. This has occurred because a growing number of Chinese composers have travelled abroad to study and create music, leading to the emergence of the modern Chinese orchestra and the reformation of traditional Chinese musical instruments. Indeed, in the cross-sectional study by Lu (2022), which surveyed 87 Chinese college students learning piano, it was found that only 8% of students used traditional Chinese music in their compositions. However, after receiving traditional Chinese music training, approximately 29%, 25% and 21% of students started integrating traditional music while creating their videos, participating in concerts, and arranging of musical compositions. These findings demonstrate the diverse foundations of the Chinese piano industry. Although influenced by traditional culture and history, it also has room to embrace Western traditions and principles. However, the opinions and views of professional piano performers regarding the impact of traditional

Chinese and Western cultures on their composition and performance are missing. This gap thus forms the groundwork of present study.

2.4. Research Gap

The findings of the literature review, however, are not free from limitations. Firstly, papers that specifically explored how sociocultural dynamics influenced piano performance and music creation are relatively limited. While research examining the impact of sociocultural influences on traditional Chinese music is abundant, studies investigating these influences in relation to piano music appear to be largely confined to Western contexts. A few studies, however, traced the origins of the piano in China, and how Chinese culture influenced the works of traditional artists. However, these studies are predominantly cross-sectional, descriptive or narrative in nature, with limited exploration of the subjective experiences and opinions of professional piano artists. Similarly, several narrative studies were reviewed regarding the differences between Western and Chinese music cultures, and papers that included the opinions of real-life piano performers and professionals were missing. These limitations therefore motivated the methodological section of this paper.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

Trans-culturalism or transcultural music theory is a useful theoretical framework for this study. Trans-culturalism in music talks about how cultures are interconnected via musical expression, embracing diversity and goes beyond geographical boundaries. Therefore, transcultural music is an interesting representation of how global trends, innovative technologies and culturally diverse music practices intersect (Ghvinjilia et al., 2023; Crawford, 2020). This framework, however, must not be confused with multiculturalism. “Multiculturalism” typically refers to a community or society that respects culturally heterogeneous group of people and accepts their existence. In other words, different cultures coexist and maintain their traditional practices in a multicultural society. it is only about the coexistence of different cultures. Trans-culturalism by contrast, emphasises overcoming cultural boundaries and intermingling or merging different cultures (Ghvinjilia et al., 2023; Crooke et al., 2024). This theoretical approach is particularly appropriate in the context of this study as it compares the role of Western and Chinese music cultures in the development and performance of the piano in China. This

theory is well suited to this study, especially since the piano was first a Western invention that was later adapted to represent traditional cultures upon its introduction in China.

In Chinese musical culture, performance practice is inseparably linked to compositional traditions. Much of contemporary Chinese piano repertoire is based on traditional folk melodies, operatic themes, or Western canonical works, making the performer's interpretive decisions dependent on compositional structure. Therefore, this study examines performance together with the repertoire and compositional influences that shape such performance.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study was qualitative. Such studies are both interpretivist and constructivist. Both these principles work together to explore a topic comprehensively, rather than only identifying relationships or outcomes. The latter approach represents a positivist paradigm. Interpretivism intends to obtain knowledge regarding the different viewpoints held by individuals, while constructivism explores how people make sense of their experiences. In general, it is argued that qualitative research is understood to preserve the subjectivity of participants' experiences, which may also be influenced by researcher bias (Tomaszewski et al., 2020; Haven et al., 2020). This was appropriate for such a study since it aimed to give meaning to the voices of professional piano players in China. This will overcome existing studies' limitations where the authors have mainly relied on objective methods of data collection to try and understand the views of Chinese pianists on how their performance is affected by culture.

3.2. Sampling

The study relied on a convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling represents the samples that are selected by the researcher based on what is readily available within their reach. For comparison, another study by Zheng and Leung (2021) examined the relationship that might exist between creativity and Chinese piano performance. The authors included a total of three participants who learned to play the piano and knew them personally. In this context, professional piano players whom the researcher reaches out to for recruitment may also provide additional contacts of other artists who could contribute to the study. Further, another

study that explored the perspectives of Chinese piano students on creativity was conducted by Zheng and Leung (2023), who selected a total of 13 interviewees. Hence, while recruiting the convenience sample for this study, it was considered that the sample size may also fall from three to thirteen professional piano players based on existing research. Professional piano performers who were personally known to the researcher were sent the consent forms, an information sheet, and participation requirements. Upon obtaining their consent, they were requested to provide additional contacts of professional piano players. The final set of 12 interviews was conducted online via WeChat and Zoom, and the responses of the participants were recorded verbatim.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews comprising open-ended questions were utilised for data collection. This is because this interview format encourages participants to provide detailed, subjective, and flexible answers, rather than the rigid, questioning format of closed-ended interviews. Additionally, the interview questions were derived from Zheng and Leung (2023), as well as Zheng and Leung (2021), in which Chinese participants shared how traditional Chinese culture forbade them to innovate or develop a personal style in their piano performance (Zheng & Leung, 2023; Zheng & Leung, 2021). Thus, the questions for this study were derived and modified from these qualitative studies, and outlined in Appendix A. Additionally, thematic analysis was used to evaluate the interview responses. It is a qualitative process by which a large amount of unstructured, subjective data is evaluated for similar and significant patterns and categorised into themes. The researcher first familiarises themselves with the data, followed by identifying codes and reviewing the themes with the existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2023; Campbell et al., 2021). The interview responses were, therefore, carefully evaluated by the researcher to identify patterns relevant to the social and cultural influences on piano performance. These patterns were hence combined to form themes which were analysed in relation to the research objectives of the study.

4. Results

4.1. Participant Characteristics

A total of 12 participants were interviewed for this study. They were all professional piano players. While some participants had professional performance

experience of nearly six years, others reported careers spanning 10, 20, and almost 50 years. For more natural language—just "two participants" also shared they had been teaching the piano professionally. The participants' interviews were analysed using NVivo. A total of six themes were identified (*Table 1*). Appendix B outlines the themes and corresponding significant statements of the participants in detail.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of Interviews

Themes	Codes
Impact of Social and Cultural Factors on Piano Performance	Cultural literacy is important for appreciating piano and musical performance.
	Understanding cultural factors also helps to disseminate music.
	Chinese culture encourages emotional expression during piano performances.
Impact of Chinese Culture on Piano Performance	Chinese culture reflects folk traditions and instruments during piano performances.
	The Chinese culture has instilled the use of the pentatonic scale in piano performance.
	Chinese culture influences piano performance through family education, policy support, stress relief, and political education.
Cultural Influence of Piano Performance Strategies	Focus on hearing to improve rhythm and emotional expression of piano performances.
	Use rhythm exercises to overcome technical difficulties.
	Engage in reading to improve understanding of a piano work.

Impact of Western Culture on Piano Performance	Western artists created diverse piano pieces reflective of their personalities.
	Need to understand the style of the Western artist and the background behind the piano piece.
	Important to research Western culture since the piano is a Western instrument.
Western vs. Chinese Culture in Piano Performance	Chinese culture pays more importance to rhythm and melody
	Western culture is more structured, and Chinese culture is more liberal in piano performance.
	The blending of cultures is appreciated.
Sociocultural Difficulties During Piano Performance	Lack of knowledge of Western artists
	Difficult to grasp Western piano style
	Need to research and train extensively

4.2. Impact of Social and Cultural Factors on Piano Performance

Participants collectively agreed on the significant role of social and cultural factors in influencing music, particularly piano performance (Appendix B). For instance, Participant 9 took the example of a Chinese piano piece 'Pi Huang' and how it represented "musical elements of Peking Opera Xi Pi and Er Huang, and used the yin and yang of ancient Chinese culture." Additionally, he said: "This piece of music is enough to illustrate that music without cultural and social development has no soul. Performers must also enrich their cultural literacy before they can use their professional skills to interpret the works more deeply."

Indeed, the importance of cultural literacy in appreciating music and piano performance was also sounded by Participant 3: "Social environment, people's comprehensive cultural literacy, economic development level and other factors have an impact on the popularization, appreciation and piano education of music." Similarly, Participant 4 and Participant 11 claimed that: "Cultural and social factors play an integral role in music, especially the piano. They not only shape the shape and style of music, but also affect the spread and reception of music" and "piano education activities can encourage people to create and spread culture." Overall, participants

agreed that cultural literacy is essential not only for understanding the meaning of piano works, but also for appreciating and spreading the music and cultural history to others.

4.3. Impact of Chinese Culture on Piano Performance

Additionally, there was a consensus among participants that traditional Chinese cultures played a significant role in influencing their piano performance (Appendix B). In this regard, Participant 11 gave the most comprehensive explanation of how strongly Chinese culture influences piano performance in three main ways: "First of all, Chinese piano performance and creation not only absorb Western piano art but are also deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture, with keynote music creation as the mainstream. Secondly, Chinese piano performance and creation are adapted from excellent folk songs, ancient songs, and operas, showing strong national characteristics. Finally, while inheriting tradition, Chinese piano performance and creation are also constantly innovating." According to Participant 4, Chinese culture is also reflected in piano performance in terms of emotional expression: "In characteristics, Chinese piano performance pays more attention to expressing emotions and artistic conception. Chinese piano works incorporate elements of traditional Chinese music, giving the works distinctive national characteristics." Participants 12 and 9 expressed their preference for Chinese culture when innovating or creating their piano compositions, because "If we understand the development of social history and culture, then piano performance will be more profound and touching" and also because "Chinese folk instruments and folk songs provide rich creative materials for the development of Chinese piano music. People can imitate the timbre of the Pihuang tune, the melody of folk songs, and the magnificent momentum of folk orchestras through the piano." Interestingly, in addition to the characteristic inclusion of the "pentatonic scale"—as stated by Participant 8—Participant 9 shared that Chinese culture also influences piano performance "through family education, policy support, stress relaxation, political education." They reasoned that the strong representation of national culture and emotional expression encourages parents to teach piano to their children, leading to educational policies and competitions to encourage piano performance and appreciation among the masses.

4.4. Cultural Influence of Piano Performance Strategies

Chinese culture also influenced the types of techniques participants used to improve their piano performance or support further piano learning (Appendix B). Participant 2 placed a strong emphasis on the importance of "hearing" in improving the rhythm and emotional expression of piano performances. The reason being, "hearing should always be put first to guide all practice and performance; pay close attention to the rigour of rhythm; observe life, gain insight into human nature, and experience emotions, so that music can be scientifically understood and accurately expressed during the performance." In contrast, the importance of reading was raised by Participant 7, who claimed that "basic exercises for daily scales, arpeggios, and chords: deepen your understanding of the performance of the work and the musical processing of the work through literature reading." Therefore, culture also played an important role in shaping the types of techniques participants used to improve their piano performance.

4.5. Impact of Western Culture on Piano Performance

Similar to Chinese culture, participants also shared how heavily their piano performance was influenced by Western culture (Appendix B). A key feature was that Western artists seemed to create diverse piano pieces, which reflected their unique styles, emotions and journeys. This was specifically stated by Participant 3, who said that "the American composer Gottschalk combined his experience of travelling in Central and South America to create piano music in various styles. In the études of the Ukrainian-born Russian composer Kapustin jazz musical elements are incorporated into the works, making them highly engaging." Due to such diversity, participants, including Participant 8, stated the importance of first understanding the style of the Western artist and the background of the piano piece: "Yes, most of the piano practice works are Western works. It is necessary to consult information to understand the creative background of the works, and to study the composer's style to create an artistic image that is in line with the spirit of the original works." Participants 2 and 4 shared that "the piano itself is a Western instrument, and this factor must be incorporated into all aspects of piano playing and teaching," and "in the process of interpreting works, it is necessary to continuously research and learn about the Western historical and cultural background, to have a deeper understanding of different style works to achieve better performance results."

Therefore, Chinese piano professionals were already familiar with the impact of Western culture on piano performance. Rather, they appreciated how Western piano music is equally diverse and reflects the composer's history, style, journeys, emotions and feelings.

Participants reported that their regular performance repertoire typically combines Western classical works — such as Beethoven sonatas, Chopin nocturnes and études, Debussy preludes — with representative Chinese piano works, including Chu Wanghua's *Sounds of the Temple*, Wang Lisan's *Shepherd Boy*, and Tan Dun's *Eight Memories in Watercolor*. Several interviewees estimated that Western repertoire forms approximately 60–70% of their formal training programs, while Chinese works account for 30–40%, especially in competitions that emphasize national style.

4.6. Western vs. Chinese Culture in Piano Performance

Participants also shared several examples of how Western and Chinese cultures influence piano performance in different ways (Appendix B). One major difference, pointed out by Participant 4 was that Chinese piano works "use melodies and harmonies with national characteristics, which have a strong Chinese flavour", while "Western piano works focus on harmony and technique, and the composers have different personalities and different styles of works." Similarly, Participant 8 shared: "The piano art system, style genre, composer personality established by Western culture lays the foundation for my personal performance and teaching abilities. Chinese works usually pay more attention to the beauty of melody lines and charm." Participant 11 shared that, "in terms of rhythm, Western music usually has strong and weak sounds that appear regularly and are divided into measures. Chinese music is different in that it has a free rhythm, like Sanban, which has no rules at all." This means that while Western piano music may be more rigid and structured in its composition, Chinese piano does not always follow specific rhythms and "uses lines as the main means of expression, shaping the language characteristics of cadence." Participant 1 shared that "Today, when cultural diversity is booming, such collisions and integrations have injected unprecedented vitality into the development of music, adding more cultural experiences and repertoire choices for performers." Therefore, there was an agreement that while Western and Chinese cultures influence piano performance in different ways, the practice of blending these traditions to create innovative piano works was also being appreciated.

4.7. Sociocultural Difficulties During Piano Performance

Participants also shared that they encountered some challenges when they tried to develop their piano style while using both Chinese and Western cultural influences (Appendix B). One challenge was that since Chinese artists did not know Western artists, they often found it difficult to effectively represent the emotions or intentions of the composer when performing Western works. This issue was articulated by Participant 8, who said: "When studying Western piano works, we often encounter scores with incomplete markings. It is difficult to accurately express the composer's intention for such works. The fundamental reason is that we do not have enough understanding of the social culture of various historical stages in the West." A similar problem was expressed by Participant 4, who noted: "When playing Western works, it is difficult to grasp the styles of each composer's works well, and you will also encounter many difficulties in performance skills." The only solution to these difficulties was extensive practice and research into various piano composers, as stated by Participant 2: "The incompatibility between Chinese piano creations and arrangements, harmony, temperament, musical style, etc., and the fixed structure of the piano keyboard has resulted in technical difficulties in performance. Practice hard to adapt." Similarly, Participant 12 also shared that "During the learning process, I needed to consult different materials, such as articles and videos, to supplement my cultural deficiencies…"

5. Discussion

Participants shared that professional piano players need to develop cultural literacy because some Chinese piano works reflect ancient stories and cultural heritage. This was also reviewed by Hu and Zheng (2024), who studied how the piano teaching has become more innovative in higher education institutions. These courses generally teach about the origins of a particular piano composition or artist by integrating it with the political ideologies and discourses of their time. By contrast, participants also shared that sociocultural factors help to disseminate piano music increasing people's awareness of their national culture and its influence. Similarly, Pereverzeva et al. (2018), as well as Hu and Zheng (2024), shared that when piano music is integrated with different cultural and technological media, it can support cultural dissemination in universities and colleges. Such integrated music sounds diverse and rich, and appeals to audiences with varied tastes. Participants believed

that Chinese piano music is a reflection of folk music, history and opera music, and also reflects national characteristics through melodies and rhythms of emotional expression. Indeed, this was also supported by Liu (2022), who noted that Chinese piano music is strongly influenced by folk songs and traditional Chinese poetry. These instil the expressive sound quality and refined intonation for which Chinese piano music is known. Interestingly, participants seemed to enjoy how the Chinese culture influenced their piano performance. The elements of Chinese culture in piano music instil patriotism, and the inclusion of various folk instruments also enables artists to express their emotions freely. These findings were similar to Jinjin and Isaiah (2021), who highlighted the feature of 'pianoization' or musical transplantation in Chinese traditional piano music, in which classical tunes are combined with the sounds of other folk instruments. This helps artists retain the melody and structure of the original composition while also making room for innovation and creative expression by including other instruments.

Participants also shared that Chinese culture can influence piano performance as seen in increasing educational policies, the enthusiasm of families and an increase in musical competitions, which collectively work to encourage Chinese students to take up piano learning and piano performances. Similarly, MacIntyre and Potter (2014) also reported that the culture of piano learning and performance was strongly shaped by competitions, grading levels and recitals in formal education, which guitarists do not have to go through. Therefore, pianists demonstrate greater effort to learn and higher introjected regulation during piano study and composition. Further, the participants shared how culture — particularly Chinese culture — influenced the kind of strategies, such as research, listening and exercises, which they used to improve their piano performance and compositions. Indeed, Yin (2023) and Liu (2023) found that young musicians generally play musical exercises repeatedly for practice and performance improvement. As they mature, they use their self-regulation skills such as establishing goals, monitoring their practice, and changing their practice time. This was not observed among professional piano players, possibly due to their experience considering that the above paper explored piano teaching for students.

While participants associated Western piano repertoire with strong individual composer personalities, it should be acknowledged that Western classical music has historically been shaped by influential national schools — such as the Russian,

German, and French traditions — which have also shaped collective stylistic characteristics. Western piano pieces have some specific rules to follow, within which composers and performers may innovate, while Chinese culture does not have such rules but mostly creates piano compositions that are nationalistic and have beautiful or artistic melodies and rhythms. Therefore, Chinese-influenced piano styles may offer composers greater artistic freedom. Interestingly, according to Zhang and Negus (2020) as well as Ye (2020), Western pianists are encouraged to expand their talents and play according to their own preferences, whereas in the United States, there is no classical tradition, and pianists prefer to consider personal values and practicality. In contrast, Chinese culture follows humanism and thus encourages piano players to cultivate moral values in their performance (Ye, 2020; Zhang & Negus, 2020). These findings therefore contradict the literature review in several respects, where it is seen that Western musical cultures can be extremely varied in their impact on piano performances. While the interviewees of this paper did acknowledge the importance of Chinese nationalism and moral thought, their ideas on Western music being structured contrast with current literature. This shows how vastly different are the experiences of actual professional Chinese piano players as compared to existing research. At the same time, participants agreed that cultures are currently being blended to create innovative piano pieces. Indeed, current research proves that in several Chinese piano pieces, such as the *Pi Huang* and the *Moments of Peking Opera,* the harmonic styles of the West are included along with the richness of traditional Chinese piano music (Huang, 2024). In summation, Chinese piano culture is not new to cultural blending and provides sufficient opportunities for artists to innovate their compositions and performances.

Existing scholarship confirms that Chinese students often face limited access to original Western musicological texts, language barriers when consulting primary sources, and uneven exposure to Western historical performance practice. Studies by Wong (2020), Lu (2022), and Bai (2021) note that despite widespread enthusiasm for Western repertoire, systematic knowledge of European musical history and stylistic schools varies significantly among learners. Creating a personal and innovative musical style was further perceived to be different by the participants because of how different Chinese and Western piano styles are in terms of rhythms, melodies, scales, styles and temperaments. These responses were similar to the studies by Zheng and Leung (2021; 2023), which examined creativity and cultural influences

in Chinese piano education. In both these studies, the authors interviewed Chinese piano students and professors regarding how they harnessed creativity in their composition and performance. The participants in these studies shared that Chinese culture encourages only those forms of creativity where the past heritage is reflected. Western piano culture, on the other hand, appreciates pianists for developing unique compositions. Chinese piano culture further requires artists to follow very strict notations, which may limit innovation. These research findings, also highlighting the vast differences between Chinese and Western cultures, contradict interview responses where professional pianists shared that Chinese culture granted them much more freedom to innovate as compared to the strict rules needed to be followed in Western piano culture (Appendix B). This could be because of the role of years of experience since the previous research focused on Chinese piano students. Nevertheless, regardless of professional expertise, participants shared about their inadequate access to and knowledge of Western piano compositions, which restricts innovation and demands further future attention.

6. Conclusion and Future Scope

This paper investigated the influence of sociocultural dynamics in contemporary Chinese piano performance. Interviews were conducted with 12 professional Chinese piano artists. A total of six themes were discovered. Firstly, all participants agreed that culture strongly influenced piano performances and composition, and supported dissemination. Secondly, Chinese culture particularly influences piano performance by encouraging artistic expression and the inclusion of various instruments to reflect folk traditions. This cultural influence was also reflected in the techniques used for improving and innovating performance. These findings therefore show the significant extent to which social and cultural factors influence the performance and composition of Chinese professional piano artists. Additionally, the participants also shared that in comparison to the strict rules and structures of Western cultures, Chinese piano cultures leave more room for freedom. This was an interesting finding because existing literature represents Chinese music and piano cultures as being extremely rigid, with limited creative freedom and a mandatory need for artists to innovate in a manner that represents national culture. This research advances the literature by showing that Chinese music cultures may be misunderstood and misrepresented in mainstream media, and that difficulties

with innovation may vary depending on levels of expertise or professional skills. Future research can, therefore, interview both Chinese and Western piano artists to compare their experiences with integrating non-native cultures into their piano performances. Future research can also be expanded to include music professionals beyond pianists to find out how broadly social and cultural factors impact music, particularly Chinese musical performance and music composition strategies. However, participants also shared that inadequate knowledge about Western culture and artists made it challenging to innovate compositions, even though they appreciated the importance of researching and blending. Therefore, future research must also focus on studying the factors responsible for hindering or supporting Chinese piano artists to innovate their performance and composition, especially in the context of being able to learn and integrate different music cultures. Overall, these findings provide useful implications for future improvements in practice and research.

6.1. Study Implications

The findings of this study hold significance for several purposes. Firstly, the findings have useful implications for amateur or future piano artists in China who wish to learn about the role of Western and traditional Chinese musical cultures, and how they combine with social factors to develop contemporary Chinese piano works. Therefore, future Chinese piano artists need to remember that culture is inseparable from their composition and performance and that they need to appreciate the cultural and social history of a piano composition while mastering it. It is also significant for amateur Chinese piano artists who are interested in social environments that may influence their fusion of Western and Chinese cultures in their future piano works. As per these study's findings, it is recommended that Chinese piano artists who are building their repertoire work in surroundings or environments that offer them sufficient opportunity to research and learn from other cultures. However, participants in this study shared how they found it difficult to understand or learn about incomplete Western compositions. The Chinese government and educational institutions must, therefore, assist artists in obtaining easier access to compositions and music research findings from various cultures that can expand their skills, and innovate their composition and performance.

The findings are also particularly useful for music technicians and digital artists who may be looking for diverse ways by which they can innovate their music through the integration of Chinese and Western music philosophies. Indeed, based on the study's findings, both Chinese and Western cultures include different advantages — such as creative freedom and structural organization — which artists can combine to produce a fusion or novel musical composition. This study is also beneficial for Chinese piano teachers and administrators of musical institutes. This is because they can use the findings to understand how social and cultural factors may be influencing the music performances of their students while identifying opportunities for improvement in the piano skill development process. For instance, it is recommended that teachers and educators provide an environment that strengthens research and offers creative freedom and practice opportunities for piano artists to improve and innovate their performance. Lastly, this study is also significant for policymakers involved in the music and cultural development of China. This is because these findings can provide policymakers with insights into the limitations of traditional Chinese music cultures, and the policy changes that can be considered to encourage the integration of Western musical cultures in the piano industry. For example, professional Chinese piano players shared how they did not always have access to and knowledge of Western piano compositions for innovations. Policymakers and institutions can, therefore, identify ways to increase this accessibility or provide technological innovations that Chinese pianists can use to improve their performance and compositions.

6.2. Limitations

There were some strengths and limitations of this study that serve as references for future research. Firstly, the study only relied on qualitative, interview findings that can be at risk of bias and reliability issues. This, however, serves as a strength considering that there have hardly been studies to explore the experiences and opinions of professional Chinese piano players on the sociocultural implications of their performance. Another limitation was that some of the participants had vast variations in their professional piano experience with some having only six years to some having several decades of expertise. While this did not make the findings very heterogeneous, they do indicate the possibility of time or years of experience as a mediator or confounding factor. Some of the piano professionals also claimed

to be teachers, which indicates another possible mediator. Future research can, therefore, segregate Chinese piano professionals based on their careers and experience to identify how these factors work with social and cultural aspects to influence piano performance, composition and innovation.

Appendices
Appendix A. Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. How do social and cultural factors influence your piano performance and interpretation of musical works?

2. In what ways does traditional Chinese culture shape your approach to piano playing or composition?

3. How do Chinese folk traditions, scales, or musical aesthetics appear in your performance repertoire?

4. How do Western musical traditions influence your piano practice, interpretation, or repertoire selection?

5. What differences do you perceive between Western and Chinese piano performance traditions?

6. What strategies do you use to improve your piano performance and musical understanding?

7. What sociocultural challenges do Chinese pianists encounter when performing Western repertoire?

8. How do you think Chinese piano performance is evolving in a global musical context?

Appendix B. Themes and Representative Participant Statements

Theme	Example Participant Statement
Impact of Sociocultural Factors	Music without cultural and social development has no soul.
Chinese Cultural Influence	Chinese piano works integrate folk melodies and operatic elements.
Performance Strategies	Listening carefully and understanding rhythm helps interpret emotional meaning.
Western Cultural Influence	Understanding the composer's background is essential for interpreting Western works.
Cultural Comparison	Western music follows structured harmonic systems while Chinese music focuses on melodic expression.
Sociocultural Difficulties	Lack of familiarity with Western composers makes interpretation difficult.

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The article was submitted 08.12.2025; approved after reviewing 21.01.2026; accepted for publication 18.02.2026.

Статья поступила в редакцию 08.12.2025; одобрена после рецензирования 21.01.2026; принята к публикации 18.02.2026.